DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 360 809 FL 020 166

TITLE Monday Morning: A Magazine for Language Teachers in China = Lundi Matin: Revue pour professeurs de langues en Chine, 1985-1992.
INSTITUTION Canada/China Language Training Centre, Beijing (China).; International Trade and Economics Univ., Beijing (China).; Saint Mary's Univ., Halifax (Nova Scotia). International Education Centre.
PUB DATE Dec 92
NOTE 349p.; All available issues included.
PUB TYPE Multilingual/Bilingual Materials (171) -- Collected Works - Serials (022)
LANGUAGE English; French
JOURNAL CIT Monday Morning; v1-5, 1985-1992

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC14 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Chinese; Curriculum; Educational Trends; *English; English (Second Language); Essays; Foreign Countries; *French; Futures (of Society); *Language Teachers; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; *Second Language Programs; Teaching Methods; Vocabulary
IDENTIFIERS Canada; China

ABSTRACT

This document consists of all six issues of the bilingual (English and French) periodical "Monday Morning" published from its inception in 1985 through 1992. This publication was developed by the Canada/China Language Training Centre (C/CLTC), a language teaching enterprise that provides French or English language training to Chinese technicians and professionals who intend to receive future training in Canada. Goals of the C/CLTC include providing linguistic and social skills necessary for students to function in Canadian academic and work situations and to introduce learning strategies that students will implement after they leave the C/CLTC. Papers address issues such as the current status and future of teaching English in China, conceptual differences in the Chinese and English essay, adapting oral English materials for use in China, problems of Chinese students in learning pronunciation, vocabulary differences between Chinese and English, and curriculum and language development and training at the C/CLTC. (JP)

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ED 360 809

Monday Morning Lundi Matin

A magazine for Language Teachers in China

revue pour professeurs de langues en Chine

Volume 1, Number 1, June 1985

through

Volume 5, Number 2, December 1992
(Six Issues)

FL 020 166

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

June 1, 1985
1 juin, 1985

Volume 1, Number 1
Tombe 1, Numero 1

Monday Morning Lundi matin

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Monday Morning: Lundi matin:
a Magazine for Language Teachers en Chine

Volume 1, Number 1, June 1985

Canada/China Language Training Centre
Box 82, University of International Trade and Economics
Beijing

FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

Dear Readers of Monday Morning

In this, the Age of Communications, the key link is still the most basic: the ability of two people to talk together in a common tongue. When those two people come from countries such as Canada and China sharing three official languages and a host of different dialects between them, a common tongue can rarely be taken for granted. The role of language teachers in building the links between our two peoples, therefore, is indeed an important one.

L'enseignement des langues en tant qu outil de communication a connu des proges remarquables au cours des dernieres annees. Les specialistes canadiens dans ce domaine ont su etablic une solide reputation de competence et de creativite. Je suis persuade que le "Lundi Matin" se revelera un moyen de communication et d'echange utile pour les professeurs de langues, tant chinois que canadiens, qui y contribueront.

In this first issue of *Monday Morning* it is my pleasure to wish the editors, contributors and readers good luck in their efforts to improve communications every day of the week!

His Excellency, R.V. Gorham
Canadian Ambassador to China

David Swanson C/CLTC Coordinator

COMMENTARY

Welcome to *Monday Morning.*

Volume One, Number One, should stagger off the press by the end of June. We hope this lets us distribute copies before most institutes in China break for the summer.

J'ai envoyé aux enseignants canadiens en Chine deux lettres leur demandant de répandre la nouvelle de la création de la revue. Ce qu'ils ont fair puisque nouse avons déjà recu plus d'articles qu'il n'en faut pour notre deuxième numéro, qui sortira à la fin de l'année. (Date de tombée : 30 novembre 1985.)

La seule ombre au tableau du premier numéro est qu'il ne compte pas d'articles sur l'enseignement du francais. C'est un peu ma faute puisque j'avais envoyé mes lettres en anglais pour solliciter des articles dans les deux langues. Il faudra, bien entendu, remédier à la situation et j'espère que nos collègues francais collaboreront au prochain numéro.

Who are we and why is this magazine here? We are the thirty or so people working at the Canada/China Language Training Centre (the C/CLTC is described in the first article in this issue), who have contacted the one hundred or so Canadians teaching in China to help us begin a language teaching publication.

De quoi y parlerons-nous? Son titre évoque le lundi, premier jour de la semaine sur lequel, en principe, se modèleront les jours suivants. Nous voulons donc que *Lundi matin* représente non seulement un réseau de resources à la disposition des enseignants en Chine, mais aussi un créneau pour des idées que nous pourrons exploiter dans nos cours, qui nous ouvriront de nouvelles, perspectives pédagogiques et nous aideront à améliorer nos méthodes. En bref, nous voulons faire de la revue une source de sujets concrets de lecture, de réflexion et d'application.

But we also have room for descriptions of our context, the Chinese language teaching situation. Two articles by Professor Huang Zhenhua and David Crooke, two of China's veteran teachers, do just this as they review the current methods and predict and recommend future directions, life after intensive reading. The remainder of the journal deals with increasingly more practical matters. Margaret Des Brisay describes the communicative tests we use at the C/CLTC, and she offers practical advice for test-makers. Quan Yongbai then synthesizes information from major language teaching texts and presents for us a teaching model that stresses teaching students how to listen instead of simply supplying them with exercises that only test listening and fail to teach it. For those teachers with access to the growing number of video players in China, Carol Pomeroy and Zhang Wenhui discuss video teaching techniques and provide us with a sample worksheet. Xu Junxian helps introduce us to the philosophy of independent learning, and he describes application of this educational philosophy. Stephen Bahry also gives us a worksheet to use in his presentation of the barebones approach to pronounciation he has organized for us at the C/CLTC. Finally, both Elizabeth Amerongen and Elizabeth Ruth Peever give us short notes on very specific teaching activities that anyone can use to deal with VOA broadcast material and with the enduring problem of students and their sentence fragments.

So we are off the ground. Please let us know of any individual or institution we have missed from our mailing list. Thanks to everyone for their support. Help us keep *Monday Morning* alive by your continued participation.

David Swanson
Canadian Coordinator
C/CLTC

A DESCRIPTION OF THE C/CLTC

What is the Canada/China Language Training Centre?

The Canada/China Language Training Centre (C/CLTC) is a language teaching enterprise jointly administered by Canada's Saint Mary's University and China's University of International Business and Economics. The Centre provides French or English language training to Chinese technicians and professionals who intend to receive further training in Canada as part of projects negotiated between China's Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency.

Each year the C/CLTC administers three language proficiency examinations so that candidates eligible for study either at the C/CLTC or in Canada can be identified. Candidates not eligible for study at the C/CLTC – including those from China's Ministry of Education – must follow language training programmes provided by their ministries.

The Canadian teachers work in teaching teams with Chinese colleagues and collaborate with Chinese colleagues to develop communicative language teaching programmes appropriate to the students' language needs. In addition, teacher training is offered through regular seminars; the content of these seminars is determined, to a large extent, by the group itself, and these seminars are intended to augment the more informal transfer of methods that occurs as part of the team teaching activities.

Who Are the Students?

C/CLTC students come from all parts of China. They range in age from people in their twenties to those in their fifties. At any given time there are approximately one hundred students registered at the Centre. Their Canadian training objectives can be remarkably diverse and these objectives have a bearing on where s/he is placed in the Centre's programmes.

Curriculum and Methodology

There are two broad teaching goals that apply to the curriculum developed at each level of the Centre's programmes:

Goal One

To provide those linguistic and social skills necessary for students to function in Canadian academic and work situations.

Goal Two

To introduce independent learning strategies that will enable students to implement their own learning programmes after they leave the C/CLTC.

There are three levels of instruction at the C/CLTC, only two of which are consistently offered. Level One stresses face-to-face interactive skills; its content is referred to as English or French for Social and Occupational Purposes. Level Two consolidates the Level One skills and introduces basic academic skills such as lecture note-taking and the writing of short compositions. This level is referred to as Pre-Academic, to reflect the introduction of the skills referred to above. Finally, Level Three, which is only offered when the number of students heading for degree programmes is sufficient, is called English for Academic Purposes. The goal of this level is to extend the skills introduced at Level Two so that students can manage degree level study.

In general, the methods used at the C/CLTC may be called communicative. This means that the communicative features of language are emphasized: the content of a message is seen to be at least as important as its form; specific grammatical items are seldom the focus of a lesson. In this way many C/CLTC students master "effective," if occasionally "defective," communication skills in a relatively short period of time.

THE EXAMINATION

Purpose:

The main purpose of the C/CLTC English Proficiency Examination is to identify those candidates who are ready to function in English or French in a work-training situation or a university programme in Canada. Test results are also used to select and place candidates who are not yet ready to procede to Canada but who may be eligible for a period of language training at the C/CLTC.

Dates:

The exams are administered three times each year at the end of each trimester at the C/CLTC. Test dates will vary somewhat from year to year. Candidates and/or their institutions should write their ministries requesting information about specific dates as far in advance as possible.

Test Format:

The C/CLTC uses a two-tiered system of testing. All external candidates will write the tests of English for Social and Occupational Purposes (ESOP). Candidates who qualify on the basis of their ESOP results and whose Canadian assignment includes study at university will also write the tests of English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

The ESOP tests consist of

a) a test of listening comprehension lasting approximately one hour administered in a language laboratory.
b) a test of reading comprehension lasting one hour and fifteen minutes.
c) a writing test lasting one hour and fifteen minutes.
d) an oral interview lasting approximately ten minutes.

The EAP tests consist of

a) a test of listening comprehension lasting approximately one hour administered in a language laboratory.
b) a test of reading comprehension lasting one and a half hours.
c) a test of writing skills lasting approximately 2½ hours.
(There is no additional oral interview for EAP level tests.)

Scheduling of Tests:

Candidates will register the Saturday before the first set of exams. Following registration, there will be a briefing for all candidates to provide them with general information about testing procedures. The ESOP tests are normally written on the first Sunday of the testing session, the oral interviews are conducted during the following week and the EAP tests are administered on the final Sunday. It follows from this that candidates who expect to sit the entire test battery should come prepared to spend at least ten days in Beijing.

Information Brochure

More detailed information about the C/CLTC exams is contained in a separate C/CLTC publication titled, *C/CLTC Exam Information Booklet.*

(This is an excerpt from the C/CLTC prospectus.)

DÉPLIANT SUR LE CCCFL : PREMIÈRE PARTIE – DESCRIPTION

Qu'est-ce que le Centre d'enseignement des langues Canada/Chine?

Le Centre enseignement des langues Canada/Chine est un programme d'enseignement des langues géré conjointement par l'Université Saint Mary du Canada et l'Université de l'économie et du commerce international de Chine. Il dispense des cours de francais ou d'anglais aux techniciens et aux spécialistes chinois qui iront au Canada poursuivre leur formation dans le cadre de projets conclus entre le ministère des Relations économiques et du commerce international de Chine et l'Agence canadienne de développement international.

Chaque année, le CELCC recrute, par le biais de trois examens de langue, les candidats qui suivront ses cours ou iront étudier au Canada. Ceux qui ne pourront être admis au centre, y compris les candidats du ministère chinois de l'Éducation, devront s'inscrire aux cours de langue donnés dans leur propre ministère.

Les enseignants canadiens forment équipe avec leurs collègues chinois pour élaborer des programmes de cours de communication adaptés aux besoins des étudiants. De plus, ils donnent régulièrement aux enseignants chinois des conférences dont les thèmes sont, le plus souvent, choisis par le groupe même, multipliant ainsi les échanges de procédés qui prennent place de facon moins structurée lors des cours donnés en équipe.

Qui sont les étudaints?

Les étudiants du CELCC, dont l'âge va de 20 ans à 50 ans, viennent de tous les coins de la Chine. Le centre en accueille généralement une centaine à la fois. Ils s'y inscrivent animés d'objectifs étonnamment divers, qui déterminent leur programme de cours.

Programmes de cours et méthodes

Les programmes de cours établis pour chaque niveau visent deux grands objectifs de formation :

Premier objectif

Fournir aux étudiants les techniques linguistiques et sociales qui leur permettront de vivre en milieu universitaire ou de travail au Canada.

Second objectif

Initier les étudiants à des procédés d'apprentissage autonome qui leur permettront d'élaborer leur propre programme d'apprentissage après qu'ils ont quitté le centre.

Le CELCC compte trois niveaux de cours, dont deux sont donnés en tout temps. Le premier niveau est axé sur les techniques d'interaction personnelle et correspond, par son contenu, aux Objectifs sociaux et professionnels des cours d'anglais ou de francais. Le deuxième niveau, comme l'indique son titre : Niveau pré-scolaire, vise à consolider les acquis du premier et initie les étudiants à des techniques scolaires de base comme la lecture, la prise de notes de cours et la rédaction de courts textes. Enfin, le troisième niveau, correspondant aux Objectifs scolaires des cours d'anglais, est offert uniquement s'il y a suffisamment d'étudiants voulant s'inscrire à des programmes conduisant à un diplôme. Il vise à perfectionner les techniques que les étudiants ont acquises au deuxième niveau et à les amener au niveau requis pour les programmes sanctionnés par un diplôme.

En général, le centre applique des méthodes dites de communication, c'est-à-dire des méthodes axées sur la language comme mode de communication : le message a un contenu au moins aussi important que le contenant et rarement les questions grammaticales figurent-elles à l'ordre du jour des cours. C'est pourquoi nombre d'étudiants du CCCFL arrivent à maitriser en un temps relativement court des techniques de communication peut-être quelquefois fautives, mais néanmoins efficaces.

Huang Zhenhua

THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN CHINA – TODAY AND TOMORROW

There is little doubt that the teaching of English in China plays an increasingly important role in the modernization campaign. It involves millions of people. The search for a better approach and suitable methodology is of great importance.

Today

The teaching of English in China does not show a homogenous pattern. From my own observation, it can roughly be divided into three categories.

A. In universities and colleges where English is the major, the present method is the result of a combination of the Chinese Confucian tradition, the influence of the western missionary schools in the 40's, the grammar-translation method copied from the Soviet Union in the 50's, the structuralist approach in the 60's and early 70's, and the influence of communicative teaching in recent years. This model only varies a little, with some colleges paying more attention to the communicative aspect.

The four to five years' schooling in Chinese universities and colleges is roughly divided into two sections. The first two years are devoted to language fundamentals, with a comprehensive course (it used to be called intensive reading) to take care of the basic grammar, vocabulary and elementary listening, speaking and reading skills. The idea behind it is that in such a way there is a teacher who is responsible for the development

of his class and he knows his students well so that he knows how to help them. Apart from this course, several others are offered to specially train the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills respectively, hoping that a bit of each can make good the inadequacy of the main course.

The second stage is to use English to learn other subjects, including linguistics, literature, sociology, and economics, at China's universities and teachers' colleges. These latter institutions play a specially important role because most of the teachers of English at the college level are trained here.

There are two general comments on the teaching of English in these institutions: on the one hand, foreign teachers are surprised at the students' proficiency; on the other, they say that the approach is terribly old-fashioned and needs a fundamental change. However, changes – although they occur slowly – are taking place: There is no longer a rigid grammar-translation method, but the method is far from being communicative. Some teachers still use reading texts as a pretext for the explanation of grammar points and vocabulary. Many others try to integrate the texts with semi-authentic language situations so as to foster the students' communicative competence.

Here, changes are slow because the majority of the teachers were not trained with the communicative approach. They are suspicious of what is new and are not quick enough to adapt.

Within this category there are three sub-divisions.

1. Departments of English language and literature in comprehensive universities, where special attention is paid to literature. Students there tend to be widely read, but teachers there tend to be more reserved in the change of methodology.
2. Colleges of foreign languages, where special attention is paid to the listening and speaking skills. Students there tend to speak more, but generally are not as widely read as students in comprehensive universities. Some colleges belonging to this category have developed specialties such as trade, journalism, American studies, etc.
3. Teachers' training colleges, where pronunciation intonation, basic grammar and teaching methodology receive close attention. Here, however, there often seems to be a lack of motivation.

B. English in other arts or sciences universities. The problem there is the shortage of qualified teachers, limited teaching hours, large classes, etc. Students there are taught grammar rules and how to read. Not very many of them achieve proficiency in listening and speaking.

C. Short-term intensive training programs such as that offered by Canada-China Language Training Centre, where the communicative approach is largely adopted, aiming at preparing the trainees for further studies and research when they are sent abroad. Students here are highly motivated. After a short period of study they make rapid progress. The problem seems to be that those who are not sent abroad immediately after the course feel it is difficult to keep up their English because they do not have adequate knowledge of the language to help them.

This is much too simplified a picture. However, I hope it does give a sketch of what is happening in the English language teaching field in China.

Tomorrow

The picture I predict is as follows:

There will be more and more short-term inensive training courses and the communicative approach will gain ground.

Along with the adoption of new teaching programs in colleges of science and technology, the teaching of English will witness a rapid development, provided the army of teachers can develop fast enough.

In universities and colleges where English is the major, the communicative approach will gain ground. Students will gradually become the motive force in learning. Nevertheless, there will be no replica of what is going on abroad. More and more attention will be paid to the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing rather than to grammatical knowledge. However, intensive reading will go on, but with less explanation of grammar and vocabulary. The main reasons are:

1. The force of tradition should not be neglected.
2. There is still a shortage of successful textbooks for the communicative approach at the beginner's level.
3. Copying facilities are still lacking, which prevents the teacher from using materials from all sources.
4. There is still the belief that given ample time, knowledge about the language can help the students build up the proficiency and ability to study on their own, so that a good return can be assured.

A reform towards the communicative approach is bound to come. A more dialectical attitude which allows the inclusion of good points from different schools is helpful. Entire new subjects can be taught in English. This will help a great deal in realizing a new phase of English language teaching in China.

David Crooke

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEBATE ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Traditionally taught "Intensive Reading" dominates English language teaching in Chinese colleges, even for third year English majors – to the extent that it has been dubbed the "super-power course." It is of course risky to generalize – especially in so vast a land as China – and there are honourable exceptions to this rule, notably in certain key institutions. There the super-power is being confronted and a methodological war of liberation being waged. By and large, however, this pedagogical super-power domination persists – especially where the shortage of trained teachers with a competent and confident command of English is most acute.

By taking too many hours, this super-power dominates the curriculum and throws it off balance; and by counting for too many credits it puts students under excessive pressure. As a result it restricts both their acquisition of urgently needed general knowledge and their mastery of basic language skills. This obsolete method calls for lecturing rather than student participation. It focuses too much on grammar, too little on communication. It stresses words and rules rather than ideas. I think this traditional intensive reading is exhausting rather than effective. So for short I call it TIRE.

How and when should intensive reading be taught – if at all? I once saw a demonstration class in which the teacher took up a short story. She asked the students carefully planned questions on the plot, specific incidents, the characters, their actions, thoughts and feelings. At the end of the two class periods she announced, to the students' surprise: "That was Intensive Reading." There had been no lecture, no display of the teacher's erudition, no harping on grammatical rules, no emphasis on separate words; but there had been some questions on structures, style and idioms, to ensure that concepts were understood. By the end of the class, the students, by their own guided participation, not by duck-stuffing, showed that they understood the story well.

That sort of intensive reading, with its focus of content and communication of ideas, teaches reading. Learned lecturing on language does not.

Why then do many devoted teachers, with long experience and good English, stick to TIRE? "That's the way I learnt English", some of them say. Did they? Have they correctly analyzed their own experience? Or have they forgotten the hundreds of books, the thousands of pages they read, focusing on content and ideas – not looking up every unknown word in the dictionary or puzzling over every fresh construction or grammatical rule but "getting on with the story" and finishing the book? Have they overlooked the English-language films they saw, the lectures and speeches they heard, the conversations they held?

The first two years of foreign language study at university should be more than enough to provide English majors with an initial grasp of basic language skills* – though not necessarily because of but more likely in spite of TIRE, which takes excessive time and effort. After the first two years, at the most, the skills acquired should be used for visual and oral communication. It is poor pedagogy to demand perfection of skills before putting them into practice. You learn to swim by swimming. *Use* itself will tighten the grasp of skills and increase accuracy and fluency. So, little or no time need be spent on intensive reading, even well-taught intensive reading (to say nothing of TIRE) after the first two years. From the third year on, reading should focus first on providing general knowledge and secondly on developing that sensitivity to language which makes for more precise understanding and more accurate expression. Much reading not only, as Bacon says, "maketh a full man;" it also, painlessly, even enjoyably, consolidates grammar and vocabulary.

Some teachers, taking into account the growing dissatisfaction with TIRE, now concede that some time limit may be set on it. They are willing to consider exemption from the course for third year university English majors who have done well enough in their first and second years. But where is the cut-off to be? Some teachers say only students who get 5 minus in TIRE at the end of their second year should be exempt. This would mean a small minority. If, pending abolition of TIRE, a cut-off point is to be applied at all, I would put it lower – at, say, 4 minus.

Why this reluctance to give UP TIRE even after two years? And why such a high cut-off point in the third? I think it arises partly from concern that the students have an inadequate grasp of basic language skills. But does TIRE provide students with mastery of basic skills? And is continuation of TIRE in the third year the way to improve them? Decades of experience show that the answer is "no." For facility with language is inseparable not only from using it, but also from knowledge of subject matter. This comes from broad general education. Concentration on TIRE, devoting many hours to it in and out of class, impedes the acquisition of general knowledge. Some teachers try to provide wide general knowledge in TIRE itself, by having long and difficult tests. This forces them to lecture students instead of drawing them into participation. Such teacher-centred education has long been abandoned by modern language-teaching methodology, which has experienced a revolution in the last half century. To ignore this, is to lag behind.

So what is to be done? In the long run do away with TIRE and replace it with oral and written practice of communication skills. As a short term measure, free the students from TIRE at the end of their second term measure, free the students from TIRE at the end of their second year. From then on let them use the English they know, to gain general knowledge, making use of the language (practice) primary and learning about its theory secondary. Does that mean they will read some material without fully understanding all the language phenomena? Very possibly. The important thing is what they do learn rather than what they don't.

Domination of the language teaching curriculum by TIRE limits, even obstructs the gaining of general knowledge. More time on extensive reading, on "content courses" will produce more educated people. China's socialist modernization calls for cultured inheritors of the sum of human knowledge. This demands linguists – but not linguists who know about language but cannot use it quickly and efficiently for cultural exchange. History shows that cultural exchange promotes progress. China's "opening up" policies acknowledge this truth. This truth should be applied to foreign language teaching.

*A few students entering third year may be so deficient in basic skills that either they should repeat the second year or be transferred to another field of study. (These extreme measures are to be avoided where possible.) Or they should be given remedial work (not more TIRE) before being allowed to take elective courses.

Margaret Desbrisay

COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TESTING AT THE C/CLTC

It is impossible to talk about language testing without first defining three important terms. Everyone has heard of them before but they are so important that I am going to discuss them again briefly. The terms are reliability, validity and feasibility. I have listed them in order of importance but I am going to deal with the last one first as it is the easiest of these terms to explain. It simply means that your test must be designed to respect the time and resources (equipment, staff) available for administering, scoring and reporting results. Someone has remarked that the ideal language test would involve following the test candidate around secretly for several days to see if he really could function successfully in those situations in which he was required to use English. Such an exam would clearly not be feasible for most institutions, however. Here at the C/CLTC, for example, we have to test as many as 300 candidates at each of three annual sessions, score the test manually and report the results in a very short time. We are, therefore, able to test only a small sample of the candidate's second language performance. We try to do so in testing conditions that simulate as closely as possible anticipated real-life contexts but we cannot test all the things we think we should test nor always test them in the way we would like.

The reliability of a test depends on the extent to which the test give consistant results. If a test were perfectly reliable, a candidate would obtain the same result no matter where or when he took the exam and, without doing anything to improve his English proficiency in the meantime, he should obtain the same result again. Obviously tests which can reach maximum reliability are tests which are objectively scored — multiple choice or true and false question types where there is only one right answer and the items focus on only one feature or fact about the language. Of course, no test can be 100% reliable. A candidate may do badly because he was tired or nervous the day of the exam or he may do better than his level of proficiency warrants because he made some lucky guesses or even because he had some prior knowledge of what would be on the exam! There are various statistical techniques for establishing the reliability of tests but this is beyond the scope of the present discussion. Here I only want to say that a reliable test is one which produces consistent results and that all tests must be first and foremost reliable.

The validity of a test depends on how well the test measures what it is intended to measure. It is relatively easy to design a language test is reliable. It is not at all easy to design a language test that is both reliable and valid. A 100 metre race gives you a reliable and valid way of telling who can run 100 metre the fastest but it is not a valid way of telling who is best at the high jump. Is this really any more ridiculous that giving a student a pen and pencil test of English verb forms and using the results to make claims about how well he can speak English? Of course, it can be said with considerable justification that the students who do best on grammar tests are usually the same students who can speak well. In the same way, statistics would show that a large majority of people over 200 cm in height have big feet, but it would still make more sense to measure their feet if foot size was what you were interested in.

There is no problem in designing a valid and reliable test of an individual's ability to run or to shoot a gun because we can all agree on what it means to do these things well. In the same way, educators are generally able to agree about what constitutes mathematical knowledge and at one time, in the not too distant past, they thought they could agree about what constituted knowledge of a language too. That was because knowing a language meant being able to produce correct sentences and there is a general agreement among native speakers about what constitutes correctness. In testing jargon we would say that there is a clear reference norm for correctness.

Today, however, there are many competing theories about what it means to know a language and we no longer accept that knowing a language means knowing its grammar rules and lots of vocabulary.

In fact, knowing the rules in the sense of being able to articulate them may not be necessary at all. For example, virtually all native speakers of English would be able to formulate a rule for changing from "go" to "went" in the two sentences:

(i) We go everyday.

(ii) We went yesterday.

but it would be hard to find a native speaker who knew the rule for using "went" in

(iii) It's time we went to bed.

Of course, the native speaker does know the rule in the only sense that really matters — he knows how and when to use it. And knowing the rule may serve as a useful memory aid for the language learner and, in many cases, may even provide a short-cut to learning, so I am not advocating that the teaching of grammar in the traditional sense be abandoned. I am simply saying that formal knowledge of grammar is not the only thing to measure if you are interested in seeing how well someone can use the language. In fact, if a student does not intend to become a translator or a spy, a high degree of grammatical accuracy may not be necessary for him. If his language training time is limited, he should concentrate on what he will need to know most which is how to communicate with other speakers of English in an effective and appropriate way to accomplish real-life needs. He needs to know how to do things in the target language and knowing grammar rules is no guarantee that he will know how to do them.

Discussions of test validity can become very theoretical and philosophical and sometimes seem more concerned with testing constructs than testing people. The concerns of the teachers at institutions that send us students to be tested are much more practical. They want to know what is different about the tests we use and how they can help their students to approach these tests well-prepared and with more confidence. At the C/CLTC, we consider our tests valid if the test contents can be seen as relevant to the language-needs of the test candidates and the tests have predictive validity in the sense of enabling us to make correct decisions about a student's future; whether he should undertake a language training course at the Centre or whether he is ready to function successfully in the language-use situation he can be expected to encounter during his stay in Canada. So far, our follow-up studies indicate that the exams are doing this job in a satisfactory manner.

Let me sum up what I have said so far. All tests must be reliable, valid and feasible. But there is no point in being reliable, that is, in getting consistent results if what you are measuring is not what you should be measuring, that is, if your tests are not valid. So one reason for the recent changes in language tests has been the recognition of the fact that traditional tests did not tell us directly what we wanted to know.

There is, however, another and even more important reason for the recent changes and that is related to the so-called backwash effect that any test has on the teaching program. Whether we like it or not, students are very much influenced in their approach to any subject matter by the way in which they expect to be tested. If a student is taking a course in history, for example, and he knows the exam questions will all focus on specific dates and names of battles or treaties then that is what he will concentrate on too. But dates and names are not all there is to history any more that verb tenses and vocabulary are all there is to language. If we want a student to take seriously the acquisition of those other components of language proficiency he will most certainly need when he finds himself immersed in an English-speaking environment, we must test these components in order to provide stimulus to learning.

What are some of these changes? Perhaps the most noticeable difference in language testing today is the increased emphasis on direct measures of speaking and writing. In the past, these two skills, particularly speaking, were not tested as rigourously as they should have been because it was thought that they could not be measured directly in any reliable way. The TOEFL test, for example, has only recently included a Test of Spoken English (TSE) to complement the main test battery. The TSE, however, is only used to test graduate students who are applying for positions as teaching assistant at American universities and involves talking with a tape recorder, so it can hardly bee considered a direct measure.

Most test designers now accept that if they are going to make predictions about how well people can function orally in their second language, they must test these people orally and under conditions that replicate as closely as possible authentic oral interaction. Elicitation procedures (or how one gets the test candidate to produce something you can evaluate) are mainly variations on the traditional interview format, but previous problems with ensuring reliable (consistent) results have been overcome to a large extent by the elaboration of explicit criteria for measuring oral production. At the C/CLTC, the candidate is interviewed by a panel of three teachers about his personal and professional life and is evaluated on the basis of his ability to comprehend the questions put to him by the panel, as well as the degree to which he is able to respond appropriately, accurately, intelligibly and without excessive hesitation: the overall criteria is his ability to transmit his message or his ideas effectively.

C/CLTC writing tests require the candidates to perform authentic tasks related to their real-life needs; a letter requesting information pertaining to one's work, for example, a description of a process or a set of directions; on our academic level tests candidates are required to perform such tasks as the development of an argument on a topic of current interest and concern: for example, discussing how a society should take care of its elderly.

In many ways, the listening and reading tests resemble traditional tests in that many of the questions are short answer and multiple choice. This is because the administrative constraints under which we operate require us to produce test results in a very short time. What is different is that the stimulus material (the passages to be heard or read) is always authentic, in the sense that it was originally intended for native speakers and not specially constructed for either teaching or testing ESL. In listening passages, C/CLTC test designers are careful to choose passages that were originally intended to be heard, recognizing that the rhetorical structure of the spoken language, even in fairly formal situations such as lectures, differs from that of the written language. We also choose passages from a wider range of contexts than more traditional tests; tables, charts, brochures, radio announcements, interviews, newspaper articles, and text books reference material have all been used on the C/CLTC tests. The tasks (or the questions may require the candidate to locate specific bits of information, transfer information from a text to a chart, to recognize the purpose of the stimulas material (to inform, to persuade, to defend) and, in the case of longer texts (EAP), to appreciate the relevance of certain parts to the whole (is it an example? a counter-example? a supporting idea?) and to infer information that is not explicited stated in the passage heard or read.

How can teachers help their students to prepare for the C/CLTC tests? Although no teacher likes to think that he or she is teaching "to the test", nevertheless, when we have students who must eventually face an external exam, it is only natural to want to prepare these students to do their best on that exam. After all, our student's exam results provide a valuable guideline as to how well we are doing as teachers.

Unfortunately, for some teachers preparing students for exams means giving them lots of examples of questions from old exams to practise, perhaps hoping that some of these old questions will appear on the next exam. We are familiar with the books available for practising for the TOEFL exam and it may well be that this is a good way to prepare for an exam like the TOEFL. It is not, however, a good way to prepare for exams like those being used at the Canada China Language Training Centre, (C/CLTC), nor for many of the newer exams being used today to screen students for work or study programmes in which the language of instruction will be English, the new British Council exams and those of the Associated Examining Boards being two other examples. To study for these exams in the way that one studies for the TOEFL would be like preparing for an I.Q. test by practising old questions. You would undoubtedly get a higher score but you would not have made yourself anymore intelligent and eventually the truth would out. Getting a good mark on an exam is a way of confirming that you have learned something. It should never be made a substitute for learning something.

Classroom activities that will help students prepare for the C/CLTC tests are those that most good teachers are already using. Encourage your students to read a wide range of reading material on topics of current interest; problems in developing countries, language learning, changes in family life and new technologies are all topics that have appeared on these tests. The China Daily is an excellent course of reading material. Encourage your students to process these texts in an authentic way. Reading comprehension involves more that just understanding the vocabulary and recognizing previously known bits of information contained in the text. Among other things it involves recognizing which bits are central or more important, which bits are introduced to support the author's argument and which to refute someone else's argument.

Authentic – meaning real-life – use of the reading material will involve using certain rapid reading techniques (called skimming and scanning). Skimming is a necessary skill, especially for university students and researchers, for no one today can keep up with all that is being published in his field. Students must be taught to go through material very quickly to decide whether or not it is worth a more thorough reading. Scanning is a necessary skill when trying to locate a specific piece of information such as an entry in a dictionary, a name on a list or a departure time on a schedule.

Another way to help your students is to give them time for free discussion in which the emphasis is put on communicating meaning and ideas and grammar is overlooked except when it interferes with meaning. Perhaps a teacher might consider two types of discussion in their classes, one re-telling of a story or personal anecdote in which the content is not so challenging that a fairly high degree of grammatical accuracy cannot be insisted upon; the other, a "managed" round table discussion on a more serious subject in which the emphasis is on getting your idea across. But, as I have said, such activities are based on the principles of good teaching and are already familiar to experienced teacher.

Let me finish with a story that has a valuable lesson for anyone involved in test design. A man once came upon a young boy who was down on his hands and knees looking for a piece of money he had dropped. "Where did you drop it? asked the man. "Over there." the boy replied. "Well, why are you looking for it over here?" "Because the light is better over here." the boy told him.

Too long language testers were relying on tests that gave a better light in the sense that there were statistically reliable but they were looking in the wrong place. No one thinks that we have found all the answers to testing language in a valid and reliable and feasible way, but if teachers and testers work together from a well-thought out assessment of real-life language needs, everyone, teacher, student and tester will be the winner.

Xu Junxian

INDEPENDENT LEARNING CENTRES: A NEW IDEA IN CHINA

A trainees' learning centre is a kind of language learning facility where trainees learn by themselves, choosing materials; deciding the pace, the direction, and the method; and practicing without feeling embarassed by avoiding making mistakes before the teacher and other classmates.

In a useful recent article, Littlejohn notes the considerable risks undertaken by teachers who assume "direct and exclusive responsibility for classroom management."[1] (And this model of teaching comes close to the model many Chinese teachers assume.) He notes how teachers often decide on their own what samples of language to present, how best to present these samples, and how much students should be supported during their learning activities. When teachers' judgements are wrong, learners may become frustrated or demoralized. Most teachers have watched how a lesson pitched too high or too low to individuals, or – worse – groups, can cause students to lose interest in their learning. Littlejohn comments:

> "It seems to be reasonable to suggest that we should not expect every trainee to learn in the same way, at the same rate, or to have the same interests and abilities as everyone else. Rather, there may, in fact, be as many approaches to language learning as there are language learners. Seen in this light, the traditional teacher-led classroom teaching can only be a partially successful arrangement. Since the content and organization of a lesson may not necessarily be appropriate for each individual learner, there is a possibility that such teacher – led classes may actually do more to hinder language learning than to facilitate it."[2]

Similarly, Littlejohn cites Stevick when he notes that

> "classroom activities often involve a parent-child relationship between the teacher and the trainees, when the latter have abdicated their right and responsibility as adults in the face of the teacher, who is always right. In this situation any learning that takes place is more likely to be "defensive", as trainees seek to protect themselves from the possibility of being exposed or embarrassed. But this learning has, for the most part, no depth; it is like a suit of armor and is a burden to be worn as little as possible, and cast off entirely (i.e. forgotten) at the first safe opportunity."[3]

Involving learners more in the management of their own courses, might thus conceivably lead to a reduction of risks involved in conducting exclusively teacher-led classes and, at the same time, could contribute to the development of a classroom atmosphere more conducive to deep learning. With this, came the idea of the "trainees' learning centre" which, in many language teaching centres in foreign countries, forms key elements in learning programmes.

At the Canada/China Language Training Centre, there is a 30 – seat language lab and a resource room used as a trainees' learning centre (TLC). In the resource room there are different reading and listening materials for different skills.

When we prepare the materials we not only consider the backgrounds of the trainees, but also their levels and their special needs. The trainees at the C/CLTC come from different professions, for example, some work with electricity, some work with animal husbandry. Also their English levels are not the same. Some trainees have studied

English for three years or more, while others only have a beginning level. Therefore their needs are quire different. Those who have learnt English for more than three years want advanced materials and want to enlarge their knowledge, those whose English level is not so high want to have more basic listening and reading materials and exercises, those whose profession has something to do with electricity want materials concerning electricity, and those who work with animal husbandry want to know more about animal husbandry. To have the trainees' learning centre work successfully, i.e. to have the trainees get the most out of their work, only having different kinds of materials is not enough. It is of special importance to give students an orientation or introduction in detail and to have a teacher on duty there. As the idea of the trainees' learning centre is new to the trainees it is quite necessary to tell them what the trainees' learning centre is, what it is for, how to use it, (i.e. how to choose the material, where to start, and how to make full use of the time there), and if problems arise, how to solve them. Having a teacher there is also important because he or she can solve the problems, both of language and learning centre mechanics. So the teacher should not only be qualified in language, but also have some knowledge about machines and equipment. Only with adequate materials, giving an understandable orientation, and having a good teacher there can the trainees' learning centre attain its goals successfully.

In the learning centre, the learners choose the materials that are suitable for their level and meet their requirements. They are encouraged to do the exercises all by themselves. If they can't understand the materials, they can listen to or read them repeatedly. If they can't get satisfactory answers from the answer keys, or really can't solve the problems, they can go to the teacher which is there for help. Now, for reading materials. We have the SRA Reading laboratory series, different scientific magazines and booklets with accompanying exercises, and the textbook "Six-way Paragraphs". These materials can not only enlarge knowledge, but also improve reading skills, such as scanning, skimming, guessing, predicting, and other comprehension skills. Besides, we have a big variety of listening materials: ***Listening In The Real World, Listening Transitions, Listening Contours, Listening Focus, Who and Where Questions, Count Me In, Missing Person, Murder Comes To Breakfast,*** and the ***Listening and Learning*** lecture series. Exercises include tasks intended either for recognizing intonation patterns and identifying unstressed words, for functions such as offering advice, and asking directions, for comprehension of lectures, stories, numbers and so on, or for note-taking.

Compared with classroom teaching the trainees' learning centre has the following advantages. Firstly, the trainees can choose the materials all by themselves, they won't feel frustrated with inappropriate materials. Secondly, they can set their own study pace. Thirdly, they can read or listen to materials and practise them repeatedly without feeling embarrassed. Fourthly, they can go to the teacher for help if they are in trouble. Fifthly, the trainees' learning centre can meet the individual needs of the trainees and fill gaps in their background knowledge.

So far the trainees offer many positive comments about their centre. "I can choose the materials I need". "If I don't understand, I can listen to the materials again". "I can imitate the voices on the tape." "The trainees' learning centre improves my listening ability". "We can choose materials freely at the trainees' learning centre". "At the trainees' learning centre we can choose the materials that are interesting or of practical use and can listen to them again and again". "We can choose the materials which we like." "At the trainees' learning centre we are able to listen to tapes again and again if we can't understand them". "At the trainees' learning centre it is very convenient for us to do what we want to according to our levels".

Now the problems with the trainees' learning centre are as follows. There are not enough seats in the language laboratory. The learning centre constantly needs more materials, specially English for special purposes and more advanced lectures, etc. The trainees note that "now we have a resource room and a language laboratory for improving listening, we want another room where we can practice our spoken English". They also suggest that we should go on having a teacher on duty there. However, considering the advantages the trainees' learning centre, (or any similar kind of learning facility), has, the trainees' learning centre will become more and more popular throughout China.

Notes

1. Andrew Peter Littlejoin, "Increasing Learning Involvement," *TESOL Quarterly*, 17 (1983), No. 2, p. 596.
2. ibid, p. 597.
3. ibid, p. 596.

Quan Yongbai

TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION

1.0 Introduction

1.1 It seems one of the most difficult tasks for the language learner is to comprehend the spoken form of the target language, yet it is probably the most neglected skill in foreign language teaching. Although most colleges, universities or foreign languages institutes in China have a special course of listening and speaking offered for English majors, listening does not obtain enough attention. There are approximately three reasons for this. First, some people think that listening is such an easy thing to teach they simply have to turn on a tape-recorder or read out a passage and then give a list of checking questions, and that's all. Secondly, and contradictory to the first, is that listening is too hard to teach because it is unobservable as compared with speaking and writing skills which can be seen and observed. Thirdly, there exist assumptions that listening will automatically be achieved when speaking is practiced. As a result, in such special courses, listening gets neglected while speaking dominates.

To solve these problems and to arouse general attention to the teaching of listening, we shall first look at what sort of activities actually go on in real social life, and then have a close look at the nature and processes of listening comprehension (LC), which will be an obvious justification for teaching. Next we will discuss how to teach LC and finally I will make a tentative suggestion of what to teach in terms of material and task preparation.

2.0 Why It Is Necessary To Teach LC

2.1 With the increasing contact between China and the outside world, foreign language learners are more likely to be exposed to native speakers. Here is a rough and incomplete list of the types of contact set out below, in random order. Not all of the examples are pure listening activities, but all involve some aural comprehension as an essential component of the communicative situation:

- hearing a speech/lecture
- watching a film/theatre show/television programme
- chatting with native speakers
- making arrangements/exchanging information
- serving as a tourist guide
- interpreting in a talk or business negotiation
- being tested aurally for advanced study abroad

For people going abroad for further study, listening abilities are even more important. As far as I know, quite a considerable number of applicants, especially science students, fail to pass the TOEFL tests or the like just because of their poor listening comprehension. The rapid change of social needs makes LC more important than ever.

2.2 Listening has long been described as a "passive" skill along with reading, in contrast to the "active" skills of speaking and writing. Recent research in psycholinguistics has found that reading and listening do involve constant mental activities. According to the American psycholinguist, Professor Wilga M. Rivers (1968: 140–142), a student learning a foreign language passes through several stages in comprehending speech, which I summarise as follows:

a) The foreign language utterances strike his ears as a stream of undifferentiated noises.

b) He gradually perceives some order in the noise, a regularity in the rise and fall of the voice and in the breath group.

c) Then he begins to distinguish the phonic and synthetic patterning: the recurring elements which give form to segments of speech.

d) He recognizes familiar elements in the mass of speech but unable to recognize the interrelationships within the whole stream of sound.

e) He acquires facility in recognizing the crucial elements which determine the message.

f) He is able to anticipate and ignore low information content and focus full attention to the high information items.

g) Finally, he absorbs the filtered information into the immediate memory (short-term memory).

The first three stages do not yet lead to comprehension, which requires selection from the stream of speech of the crucial or high information elements which determine the message. Stages (d) and (e) may be described as the "recognition stage" and stage (f) as "selection stage". Full comprehension occurs when the student reaches the last stage as comprehension calls for the retaining of information from a whole sequence of sounds, not just from the last sound. So far we have looked at LC in a longitudinal way. Now we shall observe it in a latitudinal way in terms of three aspects: hearing, decoding and understanding. I present a diagram below which, I think, will clearly illustrate the nature of listening.

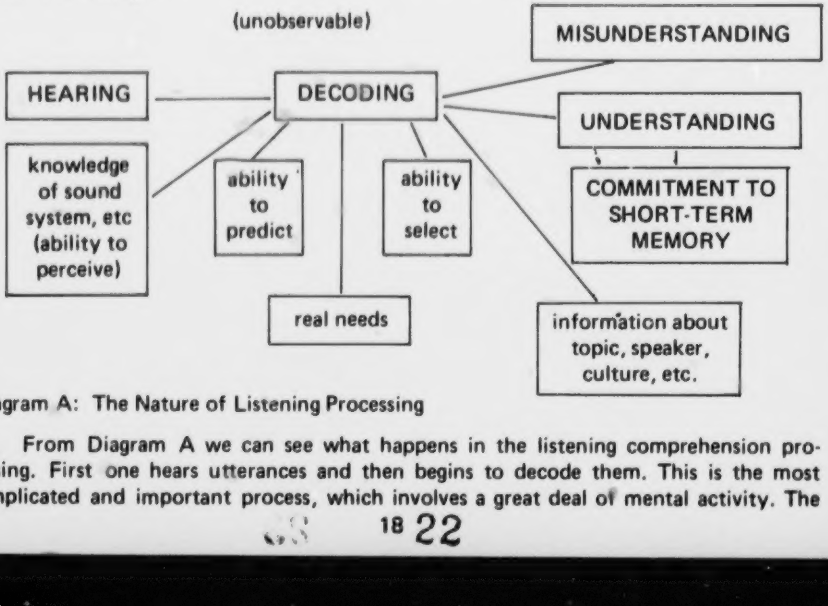
(unobservable)
MISUNDERSTANDING
HEARING
DECODING
UNDERSTANDING
knowledge of sound system, etc (ability to perceive)
ability to predict
ability to select
COMMITMENT TO SHORT-TERM MEMORY
real needs
information about topic, speaker, culture, etc.

Diagram A: The Nature of Listening Processing

From Diagram A we can see what happens in the listening comprehension processing. First one hears utterances and then begins to decode them. This is the most complicated and important process, which involves a great deal of mental activity. The whole DECODING process essentially consists of three aspects: identification, prediction and selection. Our linguistic knowledge of phonology, lexis, syntax and semantics enables us to recognize or identify those elements in the message, especially common sound sequences and grammatical patterns, which signal meaning in various ways. Redundancy of spoken English makes prediction possible. The information given in speech is often repeated. For instance, she put her gloves on to keep herself warm. The box parts are repeated information. Redundancy is an inherent part of language to protect the message. So when a listener misses a piece of language, he need not panic, as there is a good chance that other cues will enable him to understand. Because we have a purpose in mind for listening, that is, we have our real needs and information of the speaker, topic and culture, we are able to select and retain important items of information. But the DECODING does not necessarily lead to understanding unless a message is properly decoded, otherwise misunderstanding occurs.

3.0 How to Teach LC

3.1 Format or structure of a listening lesson

Typically the format of a listening lesson consists of three stages:

1. Pre-listening
2. Listening
3. Post-listening

3.2 Presentation of a listening lesson

Stage 1: Pre-listening activities are actually preparation with the students at the beginning prior to a listening task. This is very important in giving a teaching rather than a testing focus to an activity. The students must be aware of the purpose of the exercise in general and the nature of the specific task in particular before they listen to the passage. This agrees with real life listening. Rarely if ever do we listen to something without some idea of what we are going to hear. Usually we have some preconceived idea of the content, formality level and so on of the discourse we are about to hear. If we look again at the diagram presented above, we can see that in DECODING, we have to select high information items from the utterance and then absorb the filtered information to the immediate memory which is limited.* Selection is based on "real needs" (our listening purpose) and "information about topic, speaker or culture." Thus it would seem a good idea to give the students some information about the content, situation and speaker(s) other than setting a purpose before listening starts. Sometimes an introduction is necessary for essential linguistic items which will affect comprehension. An easy way to alert the students to what they are going to do is, for example, simply to say: "Today you're going to listen to an exercise which will help you to be able to follow a classroom lecture." The students should be given whatever written material is necessary for them to complete their task before they listen to the passage; they should know before they listen whether they are going to answer comprehension questions or to draw a picture, for example. There should always be an example at the beginning of the exercise to help those who may not have understood the verbal directions.

Stage 2: Listening activities

The number of times students need to listen to an exercise depends on the length and difficulty of the exercise, on the nature of the set task, and always on the students' proficiency. If the task can be completed during the listening, the listening is relatively easy, once is enough. If the students must recall facts in order to answer questions after having listened, they may need to hear the passage more than once. The students themselves are the best judge of how many times they should listen to an exercise. But caution should be taken that if teachers have to read the material to the class, they must read with normal speed and intonation. Students always ask teachers to speak or read slower, but such requests must be resisted. Slowing down tends to distort stress and intonation, but most of all it gives the students no practice in understanding normal speech, which after all is the purpose of the exercise. To solve this problem, the teacher may read it over again, rather than slowing down.

Stage 3: Post-Listening Activities

Students should be given immediate feedback on their performance of the task. The usual way is to supply them with an answer key, allowing them to assess their own performance, and then the teacher goes through the entire exercise again, explaining as she/he goes, so that they can understand their mistakes and learn from them. We may also exploit listening as an input for developing other skills, such as writing, reading or speaking. After listening to a certain passage, the students may be required to start a discussion about what they have heard, or to write or read something concerning what is said. The integration of four skills should be encouraged.

4.0 What to teach

4.1 Listening classroom material

For teachers of LC, there is always a problem of what to teach, because they have no ready text books available in China. Thus teachers should know how to develop classroom materials and design activities by themselves. Sources of materials are quite abundant. Radio and television programs such as BBC, VOA and English on Sunday provide you with an enormous selection for recordings. For first-year students at tertiary level, the special English programs on VOA may be suitable. I feel, the Science Report from VOA is especially adequate for listening materials, because the reports are usually short, covering almost all branches of science and the information in them is entirely new to the students. The advantage is that the correct answers given by the students can be believed to be based on comprehension rather than on general knowledge or logical reasoning. English-speaking teachers working in China can be asked to help make spontaneous dislogues, monologues or conversations. The material or input, for example, may be in the form of dialogue or monologue. Dialogue may be scripted or unscripted, between native speakers, between native and non-native speakers or between non-native speakers. The input should be graded according to the rate of delivery, level of vocabulary, topic, information content, fluency (amount of pausing, errors), and coherence.

4.2 Tasks

Tasks may vary according to whether they require global comprehension (where the learner is required to attempt to understand the overall meaning) or partial comprehension, i.e. only comprehension of specific items is required (Blundell and Stokes, 1981). Tasks may also vary according to whether they require a mechanical, meaningful, or communicative response (Paulston, 1971). For example, task in which the learner is asked to distinguish between two sounds or words with no comprehension required calls only for a mechanical response. But when the learner is asked to match one of two sentences to one which he or she hears, this task needs a meaningful response, but no creative ability. A communicative response is one in which the learner has to create a suitable response on the basis of what is understood. For example, the listener may hear a problem discussed and then have to suggest a solution. There are a large number of listening tasks. Here are some common task types:

1. *Matching or distinguishing.* Choosing a response in written or pictorial form that corresponds with what was heard, e.g., choosing a picture to match a situation, such as listening to a radio advertisement and finding the product from a set of pictures.
2. *Transferring.* Exercises of this type involve receiving information in one form and transferring it or parts of it into another form (e.g., listening to a discussion about a house and then sketching the house).
3. *Transcribing.* Listening and then writing down what was heard. Dictation is the most common example of this activity.
4. *Scanning.* Exercises in which listeners must extract selected items by scanning the input in order to find a special piece of information (e.g., listening to a news broadcast and identifying the name of the winning party in an election).
5. *Skimming.* Exercises in which listeners must get the gist of the passage by skimming the input, ignoring irrelevant elements or specific details, etc. (e.g. listening to a talk and reporting to the class what the talk is about in a few words).
6. *Condensing.* Reducing what is heard to an outline of main points, such as is required in note-taking.
7. *Answering.* Answering questions from the input. Different sorts of questions will focus on different levels of listening (e.g. questions which require recall of details, those which require inferences and deductions, those which require evaluation or reactions).
8. *Predicting.* Guessing or predicting outcomes, causes, relationships, and so on, based on information presented in a conversation or narrative.

5.0 Conclusion

Now we can conclude, by as referring back to the problems mentioned in the introduction, that teaching listening is not as easy as people imagine. A warning should be given to teachers to make sure that they are teaching instead of testing. A great many listening activities tend to test, rather than teach. The simple activity mentioned in Problem 1 assumes that a set of skills is already acquired and you simply provide opportunities for the learner to practice them. This is testing not teaching. For teaching, we should assume that the skills are not known and the teacher should try to help the learner to acquire them. We can also see, on the other hand, that LC is teachable, though not easy, if we obtain a good knowledge of the nature of the processes of LC. As for the third problem that listening will automatically be picked up as long as speaking is practised, this is not true, if only because listening precedes speaking. According to Krashen's second language acquisition theory, or the input hypothesis, the opposite is true. We acquire spoken fluency not by practicing talking but by understanding input, by listening and reading. Speaking fluency cannot be taught directly. Rather, it "emerges" over time, on its own (Krashen 1982, 22). In conclusion, then, the relationship between listening (input), speaking (output) and language acquisition is explicitly illustrated by Diagram B below**:

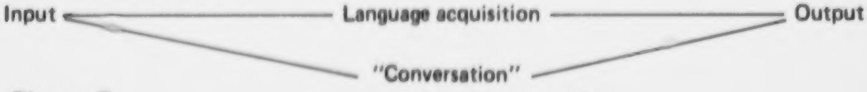

Diagram B

In short, comprehensible *input* is responsible for progress in language acquisition. *Output* is possible as a result of acquired competence.

When performers *speak,* they encourage *input* (people speak to them). This is *conversation.*

Krashen's theory strongly voices the IMPORTANCE of listening.

Note:

*For detailed information, please see Rivers (1968): *Teaching Foreign-Language Skills,* Chapter 6.

**This diagram comes from Krashen, Stephen D. (1982): *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition,* p. 61.

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Carol Pomeroy and Zhong Wenhui

USING VIDEO IN THE ESL CLASSROOM

In Western countries, many ESL teachers have used video for some time. In China, while many films and videos are available for use in the classroom, teachers are not always sure how best to exploit their potential. Frequently, for example, they are simply shown as evening entertainment, and students are left to make of them what they will, without benefit of teacher guidance. It is the purpose of this article, therefore, to discuss ways video can be used in teaching ESL. We will begin by briefly mentioning two ways it has been used, before focusing on its application to the teaching of ESL. We will discuss the advantages, criteria for selection, making a worksheet, showing a video, and problems to avoid. It is hoped that our experience in this area will encourage other teachers to try using video and to improve on what we have done.

One of the ways most Western teachers are familiar with is video in teacher training classes. The advantage of filming micro-teaching is to allow student teachers to see and assess themselves. Watching the way one uses gestures, voice, facial expressions, for example is clearer than hearing the teacher's explanation. In addition, the tape may be watched as many times as desired.

Teachers who have videoed their ESL students do so for several reasons. For example, students can role play situations they are likely to find themselves in, providing them the opportunity to understand more about the way they are using English, both in verbal and non-verbal aspects. Fourth-year students at the Guangzhou Institute of Foreign Languages who go through a period of apprenticeship before being assigned jobs could be videoed in different situations; e.g., the Trade Fair, China Travel Service, interpreting for businessmen. Again, the advantage is being able to watch not only themselves, but interaction with the foreigners they deal with. This gives feedback on use of the language, as well as awareness of problems in interpreting, calling attention to both communication and appropriacy.

Video in the sense we will be using it for our discussion includes television programmes, documentaries and other types of film which have been put onto videotape, as well as commercial videos. It is this type of video which is the most frequently used in teaching ESL. One advantage is the ability to replay the programme as often as necessary, pausing whenever desirable. Another important advantage is the opportunity provided not only to learn more about how English is used in real situations, but to gain insight into cultures of English-speaking people. This is especially important in China, where students are learning the language in a non-English-speaking environment. To see and analyze films helps students become familiar with language and culture, e.g., behaviour, customs, verbal and non-verbal communication. This can make up, to a certain extent, for the lack of contact with many native speakers in addition to helping build up needed confidence in dealing with English-speakers in real situations.

In fact, many institutes and universities in China already have audio-visual centres with videotaped programmes in stock. These could be exchanged with those from other institutes.

Criteria for selecting a video

It is important to keep the following in mind when choosing a video for an ESL class: age of students, linguistic ability, sophistication, interests, and objectives. For example, at the Guangzhou Foreign Languages Institute, some second-year classes are using CECL textbooks (Communicative English for Chinese Learners), each unit of which includes two videos. In the unit, ***Language,*** "A Chairy Tale" (on non-verbal communication) and "Varieties of American English – Stylistic Differences" were used, with worksheets. In the course, Language and Cultures, given in the Post-Graduate Course in Applied Linguistics, videos are chosen to help students understand lifestyles, values, and problems as well as language used in English-speaking countries. "All on a Summer's Day", one video chosen for this class, presents a picture of lifestyles in Britain today.

Length is also important. We recommend a limit of 15-20 minutes because of students' attention span, and the opportunity for adequate exploitation. This does not mean we would exclude longer programmes that were suitable for other reasons. But we would advise they be divided into parts and dealt with in more than one class.

Making a Worksheet

Rather than leaving students on their own to watch a video, we advise using a worksheet. This can be as simple or detailed as deemed appropriate, in order to guide students' understanding of what they are watching. We would also emphasize that video is not an elaborate form of listening comprehension. The obvious focus is on the visual rather than audio aspect. This should be kept in mind when writing a worksheet.

Another point to remember is that video can be analyzed at two levels. This first is micro, which includes visual and language aspects. At the visual there is camera work and montage (arrangement of different scenes or various elements within a frame). The language aspect includes verbal and non-verbal. The second level is macro – theme, plot, characters and how they reflect the culture of the society. It is of course not always necessary or desirable to make analyses which include all aspects at both levels.

When writing a worksheet we recommend the following procedure, which we have found useful. View the video once, noting counter numbers, general content, and points to emphasize. View a second time for more detail and to note anything missed the first time. Then organize the notes and write questions on points to draw students' attention to. After this it is useful to watch the video, doing the tasks you have set. Revise as necessary, making sure all instructions and questions are clear.

When setting tasks, the following points should be kept in mind.

a) Students will view the programme once to get a general idea. Therefore, questions to answer after the first viewing should be on general content. The choice of question type depends partly on the type of programme and partly on the linguistic level of the students.

b) Students will watch a second time for more specific information. This time you may wish to show only specific parts or the complete programme again. Either way, questions should be written accordingly.

c) You may want to focus mainly on visual aspects or a mixture of visual and verbal. You may want some discussion questions before watching for the first time and/or after viewing.

d) It is useful, too, to set the tasks so that they follow the order of the video.

e) You can give part of the script or visual cues for special attention. (See the sample worksheet below).

Showing the Video

Pre-video activities may include work done in regular class time, such as a reading or discussion on a similar topic (as in the CECL units). We have also found prediction tasks useful in activating the students' thinking. We may give the title or show a few opening shots and ask what the content will probably be. These questions may be included in the worksheet or asked orally.

Since the first viewing is to give a general idea, it can be followed by a discussion of any question on general content and any points that need clarifying. Before the second viewing be sure to allow time for the students to read the questions. It may be necessary to pause at times to allow students time to answer. In some cases a third viewing may be necessary, if there are still some points of confusion or if the second viewing is of selected parts only.

Problems

We have found that showing a video in a language laboratory, where each student is separated in a booth, is not advisable. While students certainly hear better with headphones, during the class they cannot discuss, the teacher cannot get feedback, and there is only one-way communication from teacher to student. It is therefore difficult to know how well the class is going and what problems the students may be having. This may also lead students to believe that they are simply doing another listening comprehension exercise and focus their attention on the worksheet rather than on the video. If the video class is in a room with a monitor that can be controlled by the teacher, this is desirable. Students can easily be divided into groups and teacher-student contact is increased. The teacher can adapt to the needs and interests of the class.

Conclusion

Video does more than simply provide another type of activity in the classroom. Our experience has shown that it adds another dimension to the language learning experience. But it can be more than one more dimension to the language learning experience. It can be a more effective way of learning than just reading about another culture. It can generate discussion, make the culture and people more real, thus motivating student interest. We hope that our experience will encourage others to try video for educational purposes, and to find ways to improve on what we have done.

SAMPLE WORKSHEET

The City: A Time for Decision

Prediction

1. From the title, what do you think the theme of the video will be?
2. What kind of decisions do you think are being made about cities in the US?
3. While you are watching the video, note the phases it goes through. Below are the headings appropriate to the four sections into whih the programme may be divided, after the introduction. Look through them and number them in what you think would be the probable order of presentation. As you watch, put numbers next to the section heading.

Section	Anticipated	As viewed
Introduction: Crisis of city development		
New kinds of city development		
Historical development of American cities		

Urgent need for a planned future

Analysis of present problems

Now watch the video. After doing so, answer the following questions.

It is a principle of visual media that the visual dominates the auditory – you mainly notice and are influenced by what you see. It is important to take careful note of what the director communicates visually.

4. In the opening sequence the commentator says, "This is the rhythm of a city ... Any big city, anywhere ... " List the visual details the director chooses to illustrate this rhythm.

We see shots of a machine scooping up lumps of concrete. The video cuts between this kind of shot and another. What is going on in this sequence?

5. After the introductory sequence, the video begins to "examine how their cities got that way." Immediately the *kind* of visual image changes. What is the difference between the visuals in the introduction and those in the analytical part that follows?

6. The commentary states, "Buildings got high, wide, and less handsome. The big squeeze was on."
   a. What is meant by a "big squeeze"?
   b. How is this colloquial expression illustrated in the video?
   c. What is the tone of the illustration? That is, what impression does it make on your responses?

7. "1900 ushered in the age of practical inventions." The first three inventions mentioned are dealt with in parallel sentences. This makes the commentary easy to follow. From these sentences, fill in the following information.

	Invention	Advantage	Disadvantage
1.			
2.			
3.			

8. How does the director illustrate the effect of the automobile on American life? Is this an indication of his attitude toward the automboile?

9. What percentage of Americans live in cities today?

10. The high percentage of Americans in urban areas has led to several problems. Below, list the problems and their solutions in note form. Some solutions have advantages and disadvantages. When discussed in the video, note these.

Problem	Solution	Advantage	Disadvantage

11. How is a town like Rexton an answer to many of the problems in today's cities?

12. "Every 12 seconds, a new American is born ... "
   a. To introduce this final section, what images are used?
      What do we hear?
      What do we see?
   b. The video cuts back and forth between two sets of visual images. What are these?

13. What does the attitude toward the future, implied in the commentary, seem to be?

14. Are any of the problems mentioned in the video applicable to cities in China? If so, which ones? What is being done to solve these problems?

Stephen Bahry

SURVIVAL PRONUNCATION: A CHECKLIST

In the course of developing the pronunciation component of the curriculum at C/CLTC, we have had to confront several problems. Perhaps some of these problems are unique to our centre, but most I think, may be applicable to other EFL situations in China.

The first problem is that our students' oral/aural skills lag behind their reading and writing skills, and although on entering the centre their listening ability increases very rapidly, their speaking skills, especially pronunciation, often improve only slowly. Much time and attention is necessary to bring their pronunciation competence to the level of their other skills.

Another problem is the varied background of the students. They come from all regions of China, range in age from the early 20's to the mid 50's, and their background in English varies from precultural revolution university study to post-cultural revolution self-study. In any class, the level of pronunciation ability is mixed – there are some higher level students with poor pronunciation and some lower level students with fair pronunciation. Further, much of the difficulty stems from interference from Chinese, but from which variety of Chinese? What may be difficult for southerners may be easy for northerners and vice-versa.

This leads us to another difficulty. The quality of information available to us concerning Chinese/English pronunciation problems is poor. The few reference works we were able to consult were primarily intended for teachers of Cantonese speakers. There was some reference made to other dialects of Chinese, but the information on Mandarin speakers' difficulties seemed tacked on to the Cantonese material, and in a few cases differed from our own observations.

The final problem, perhaps restricted to our centre, is a time-constraint. The purpose of our programme is to ensure the success of the students technical training in Canada by first developing in China *in as short a time as possible,* the linguistic and social skills necessary for life in Canada. On average, our students are with us only for two ten week terms. We have to find a way to do this markedly in only twenty weeks. Our solution is to teach them, in effect, *SURVIVAL PRONUNCIATION.*

To determine what is included in this idea we have to rely mostly on our own observations, however faulty. We use two criteria: first, we should teach those aspects of English pronunciation that are most important to communication; second, we should stress those that are most difficult for Chinese learners. Therefore, the primary goal of our programme is to minimize the occurrence of actual misunderstanding due to poor pronunciation. Our secondary goal is to reduce the effect of poor pronunciation on social interaction between Chinese and Canadians, inhibiting Chinese from speaking or distracting Canadians from the message the Chinese is trying to get across.

To meet these goals, we have developed a checklist (see end of paper) of what we consider to be key areas to be covered. The checklist covers four basic areas: Intonation, Rythm, Vowel Contrasts and Consonant Contrasts.

It is our opinion that, with our students, intonation and rhythm are more important than phoneme contrasts to effective communication; therefore we have reduced the vowel and consonant contrast to a short list of those sounds which seemed to us to give the greatest trouble to our students.

All the points on the checklist are to be covered briefly in class time. Any other pronunciation errors are to be dealt with at the teacher's discretion, as they occur. The use of the checklist is twofold. First at the beginning of term, the students are interviewed by the teacher. Using the checklist, the teacher can make a rough assessment of the students level for each point, either OK, fair, or poor. Poor would mean often incomprehensible, Fair, comprehensible, but accent obtrusive, OK, accent unobtrusive. Students judged as "poor" in most categories will be referred to a twice-weekly pronunciation workshop for special help.

The rest of the students will be advised on what areas they are weakest in and given guidance on how to further improve by self-study. We are at present producing material for self-study of these areas which we have adapted from several sources. For consonant contrasts, we have adapted material from Ann Baker's *Ship or Sheep?* For vowel contrasts, rhythm and intonation we have adapted material from Howard Woods' series of books, *Intonation, Rhythm and Unstress,* and *Vowel Dimensions,* all published by the Public Service Commission in Ottawa. We hope by using such a check list, to be able to monitor student's progress and also to be able to compile more accurate information about the needs of our students, so we can adjust our curriculum accordingly.

(Checklist is on the following page)

PRONUNCIATION CHECKLIST

STUDENTS NAME:

CLASS:

STUDENT'S HOME/NATIVE PROVINCE:

DATE:

		OK	FAIR	POOR
INTONATION	Raising – yes/no questions Falling – Wh questions Falling – statements			
RHYTHM	Liaison – intrusive schwa, etc Function words reduced Word stress			
PHONEME CONTRASTS VOWELS	Tense/lax beat/bit bait/bet boat/but pool/pull Mid/low bet/bat but/bought			
	Other			
CONSONANTS	s/sh r/l l/n			
	v/w o/s zh/r			
	Other			

Elizabeth Amerongen

USING THE NEWS

Here is a teaching activity which gets things going first thing in the morning. It involves a topic of universal interest, the news, and takes little or no preparation.

Class level – Low intermediate to advanced

Objectives –

a. To provide students with an opportunity to talk about a variety of topics in a truly communicative fashion.
b. To teach new vocabulary.
c. To teach the pronunciation of familiar and unfamiliar words.
d. To encourage students to listen to the news and to each other in the classroom.

Activity –

A. Ask students to be prepared to tell the class some news on the following day. The next day ask them to tell the class a piece of news while the teacher writes notes on the board. The students can be asked for general news, science news, or even news within the school depending on the level and focus of the class. Example of notes:

General News

–	earthquake in Chile		–	Deng Xiao Ping
–	thousands homeless	or		meets Soviets
–	100 dead		–	discuss Vietnam and Afghanistan

Science News

–	American scientist		–	Chinese scientist
	discovers material	or		discovers medicine
–	replace aluminium		–	heart disease

B. When the board is full of notes underline words which are difficult to pronounce and mark the stress. Then have students practise pronouncing the words.

C. In groups of two have students retell the news to each other in complete sentences. For variation have a few students retell the news to the whole class.

D. It is helpful to introduce the following phrases:
It said in the news that ...
I heard on the radio that ...
I read in a magazine that ...
In the newspaper it said that ...
In the newspaper it said that ...
Mr. said ...
China said ...

Elizabeth Ruth Peever

TEACHING THE IDEA OF A SENTENCE

For the past four years I have been teaching writing to Chinese students and I have found that a fundamental problem is the definition of a sentence. What is a sentence? If you are not sure about the rules for good sentences in written English, you may end up writing *FRAGMENTS* – pieces of sentences that are mistakenly punctuated as if they were good sentences.

There are five rules for producing good sentences:

1. A good sentence must have a subject and verb; if it doesn't it is a fragment.
2. Two-place connectors like – because, if, when – form dependent clauses, so you cannot place a period between the two clauses. If you do, you will produce a fragment. If the two-place connector comes at the beginning of the two clauses, put a comma before the second clause. If the two-place connector comes between the two clauses, use no punctuation at all.
3. Fragment problems can arise with the words WHO, WHICH, and THAT. Clauses that begin with relative pronouns are dependent clauses, so they should not be punctuated as sentences. Instead, they should be attached to the independent clause that comes before them. If the relative pronoun comes *after* the name of a person or place, use a comma before the relative pronoun.
4. A good sentence must have a subject and a real verb rather than a *pseudo-verb,* otherwise it will be a fragment.
5. The subject of a sentence must always appear on the page unless it is a command.

This is not an exhaustive list of rules for sentences at all but sufficient for the following exercise which attempts to practise the points made above.

Proofreading for fragments

Proofread the following composition to correct sentence fragment errors.

Winner in Hangzhou

If you can survive a Hangzhou winter. You can survive almost anything. When the temperature is zero degrees. You know that you are in for trouble unless you can learn how to defeat the cold. How can you overcome the cold? Here are some suggestions.

First, you must learn to dress warmly. To do this, you must forget about how you look. And think only about staying warm. One way to stay warm is to wear layers of clothes: With a shirt and one or two sweaters under your coat. You should also buy long underwear for your legs. When you go out, you may look like a fat panda bear, but don't worry about that, you'll be warm:

Secondly, in Hangzhou you have to worry about frostbite. There are three areas on your body. Which frostbite can hit – your ears, hands and feet. How can you avoid frostbite? You should never go outside when it is below zero. Without a hat or scarf covering your ears. And warm gloves or mittens covering your hands. For your feet, you need some very warm socks and a pair of padded shoes or warm boots. When you are dressed warmly, you can go outside. Even if it is snowing and the temperature is falling.

Thirdly, if you want to stay warm. You need to learn a few more points. You must learn to avoid standing on the corner. Waiting for the bus. How can you do this? It helps if you live close to the bus stop. Because you can wait in your room until the bus comes. Then when it comes you can just hurry to the bus stop. If you don't live close to a bus stop. You must find a shelter. That can protect you from the wind. If you can't find a shelter, you must keep moving. You should walk back and forth. Stamping your feet. Some people may think you are nervous. But you won't care because you will be warm.

If you follow this advice. You are sure to survive a winter in Hangzhou. You have one other choice. You can move to Hainan Island for the winter. Which is always warm during the winter months.

NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

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July 31, 1986
31 juillet, 1986

Volume 2, Number 1
Tombe 2, Numero 1

Monday Morning   Lundi matin

A magazine for language teachers in China

Revue pour les professeurs de langues en Chine

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Monday Morning: Lundi matin
A magazine for language teachers in China
Revue pour les professeurs de langues en Chine

Volume 2, Number 1, July, 1986

Canada/China Language Training Centre
Box 82, University of International Trade and Economics
Beijing

IN MEMORIAM

This issue of Monday Morning is dedicated to the memories of Ian Charles Gertsbain and Chen Lijia, both headteachers at the CCLTC, who died in a tragic car accident on July 19, 1985.

The CCLTC staff miss and remember two loving, generous, loyal colleagues and friends. We continue to be inspired by Ian and Lijia's warmth and dedication.

PREFACE

Dear Readers of Monday Morning/Lundi Matin

This issue of *Monday Moring/Lundi Matin* which contains articles in French and English by Chinese, Canadian, British and American Language Teachers, is representative of the cooperative nature of Language Programs in China. The Canada/China Language Training Centre recognizes the need for continued communication and exchange of ideas among teachers and is, therefore, pleased to provide in *Monday Moring/Lundi Matin,* a forum for reflection on language teaching in China.

Producing a journal requires a great deal of energy, commitment, and creativity and I would like to extend gratitude and congratulations to the editors and contributors who together produced Volume 2, Number 1 of *Monday Morning/Lundi Matin.*

Helen Vanwel
Canadian Director
Canada/China Language Training Centre

Chers lecteurs du Monday Morning-Lundi matin,

Cette dernière parution du *Monday Morning-Lundi matin* contient des articles écritis en français et en anglais par des professeurs de langue d'origine chinoise, canadienne, britannique et américaine. Cette diversité ethnique représente bien la nature coopérative du Programme de langue en Chine.

Le Centre de formation linguistique Canada-Chine est conscient de la nécessité d'une bonne communication et d'échanges d'idées entre les différents professeurs et il est donc heureux de fournir au *Monday Morning-Lundi matin* cet ensemble de réflexions sur l'enseignement des langues en Chine.

Produire un journal demande beaucoup d'énergie, de travail et de créativité et je voudrais remercier et féliciter les responsables ainsi que tous ceux qui ont contribué à réaliser le Volume 2, Numéro I, du *Monday Morning-Lundi matin.*

Helen Vanwel
Directrice canadienne
Centre de formation linguistique
Canada-Chine

EDITORIAL

The first issue of Monday Morning/Lundi Matin appeared in the summer of 1985. We had hoped to publish a second issue in the same year but this was not possible. We sincerely hope that our third issue will appear in the winter of 1987. There seems to be a clear need for a forum for second language teaching issues in China.

We try to select articles which, while springing from a particular second language teaching situation in China, have implications for other situations. Mu Hai's article on the introduction of communicative metodology into China is a case in point. It points out some of the difficulties that teachers will recognize all too clearly from working in other countries as well.

Our first issue described the Canada/China Language Training Centre's activities. In this issue, we include two articles based on the UCLA's team experience at the Social Sciences English Language Centre in Beijing's Academy of Social Sciences. Lee Spencer describes the content-oriented "adjunct-model" they are following, while Chen Xiangrong and L. Paige Whitley outline the team-teaching approach adopted in this program. Both articles provide insight for teachers in other programs in China and elsewhere.

Writing, reading, speaking and listening are all considered in the remaining articles. Richard Cooper's article on critical thinking in the composition class, and Kim Echelin's article on differences in the Chinese and English essay both provide insight into the difficulties in teaching effective writing across cultures.

While teachers of English are bombarded with articles on skimming and scanning, the notions of "écrémage" and "répérage" are possibly new to teachers of French in China. Ma Xui Ying and Lui Bao Yi's article on improving reading skills stems from first-hand experiences in China and Canada.

Pronunciation featured in our first issue, and another aspect of oral skills is part of this one. Laura Ho deals with effective means for training students in strategies to handle oral interviews more effectively. Finally, Chen Xiangrong outlines a step-by-step program in helping students listen to authentic news broadcasts better.

It is worth mentioning that Monday Morning/Lundi Matin always welcomes feedback and suggestions from readers as well as contributions.

Anne Donaldson *David Sanders*
(Joint Editors)

A DESCRIPTION OF THE C/CLTC .

What is the Canada/China Language Training Centre?

The Canada/China Language Training Centre (C/CLTC) is a language teaching enterprise jointly administered by Canada's Saint Mary's University and China's University of International Business and Economics. The Centre provides French or English language training to Chinese technicians and professionals who intend to receive further training in Canada as part of projects negotiated between China's Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency.

Each year the C/CLTC administers three language proficiency examinations so that candidates eligible for study either at the C/CLTC or in Canada can be identified. Canadidates not eligible for study at the C/CLTC – including those from China's Ministry of Education – must follow language training programmes provided by their ministries.

The Canadian teachers work in teaching teams with Chinese colleagues and collaborate with Chinese colleagues to develop communicative language teaching programmes appropriate to the students' language needs. In addition, teacher training is offered through regular seminars; the content of these seminars is determined, to a large extent, by the group itself, and these seminars are intended to augment the more informal transfer of methods that occurs as part of the team teaching activities.

Who Are the Students?

C/CLTC students come from all parts of China. They range in age from people in their twenties to those in their fifties. At any given time there are approximately one hundred students registered at the Centre. Their Canadian training objectives can be remarkably diverse and these objectives have a bearing on where s/he is placed in the Centre's programmes.

Qu'est-ce que le Centre d'enseignement des langues Canada/Chine?

Le Centre enseignement des langues Canada/Chine est un programme d'enseignement des langues géré conjointement par l'Université Saint Mary du Canada et l'Université de l'économie et du commerce international de Chine. Il dispense des cours de français ou d'anglais aux techniciens et aux spécialistes chinois qui iront au Canada poursuivre leur formation dans le cadre de projets conclus entre le ministère des Relations économiques et du commerce international de Chine et l'Agence canadienne de développement international.

Chaque année, le CELCC recrute, par le biais de trois examens de langue, les candidats qui suivront ses cours ou iront étudier au Canada. Ceux qui ne pourront être admis au centre, y compris les candidats du ministère chinois de l'Education, devront s'inscrire aux cours de langue donnés dans leur propre ministère.

Les enseignants canadiens forment équipe avec leurs collègues chinois pour élaborer des programmes de cours de communication adaptés aux besoins des étudiants. De plus, ils donnent régulièrement aux enseignants chinois des conferences dont les thèmes sont, le plus souvent, choisis par le groupe même, multipliant ainsi les échanges de procédés qui prennent place de facon moins structurée lors des cours donnes en équipe.

Qui sont les étudiants?

Les étudiants du CELCC, dont l'âge va de 20 ans à 50 ans, viennent de tous les coins de la Chine. Le centre en accueille généralement une centaine à la fois. Ils s'y inscrivent animés d'objectifs étonnamment divers, qui determinent leur programme de cours.

Mu Hai

APPLYING COMMUNICATIVE METHODOLOGY IN CHINA: AN OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

There is every probability that the teaching of the English language in China today faces a fundamental change. For all its effectiveness, current teaching often falls short in its pedagogy and thus is expected to give way to the strong influence of a communicative approach that is theoretically desirable in present-day language teaching practice. As this view has been expressed by applied linguists both at home and abroad and is reflected in many criticisms levelled against the way English has been taught in China, it is time that we gave the communicative approach serious thought.

When it comes to the attempt to make this transition possible, there still remains, however, the question of how we should work towards that goal. Indeed, the reform towards the communicative approach is a formidable task which demands both theoretical justification and practical exemplification.

BACKGROUND TO THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

To pave the way for the change that is bound to come, we should start from scratch to ensure that there is a growing awareness in our profession of the assumptions underlying the communicative approach.

For example, though the theoretical perspectives from psycholinguistics and social sciences since the late 50s have had their impact on the communicative approach, this trend is essentially derived from a concern to come to grips with the nature of language use. It also comes from the assumption that a teaching methodology "should be based not only on insights as to the nature of 'knowledge of a language', but also on those concerned with the process involved in its use" (Johnson 1982:147). For this very reason, the communicative approach is likely to appeal to teachers and students who are concerned with developing a communicative capacity to exploit the functional possibilities of a language.

What is this communicative approach? It seems that the communicative approach is much more sophisticated than the notion of a 'method' and a repertoire of teaching techniques randomly pieced together. The approach is a methodology which is derived from a rational understanding of the issues entailed in language acquisition and teaching and exemplifies the way those issues are tackled by applied linguists.

It thus draws upon the insights into the nature and needs of the learner, and the nature of the environment that has an effect on him or her. It is the product of fundamental principles implicit in the components of the teaching-learning situation – namely the learner, the language, the environment and the various language activities which encourage communicative processes among the learners.

ASPECTS OF A COMMUNICATIVE METHODOLOGY

There is no doubt that communicative methodology attaches great importance to the activating of the communicative processes. If the communicative process is to continue naturally in a language classroom, the following characteristics as discussed by Johnson (1982: 147-55) are considered indispensable.

First, the receptive and productive use of a language must proceed within "real time." Second, the process can only be sustained in a language teaching situation which is "task-oriented." Third, the process involves real instances of language use for communication which contain an element of doubt, uncertainty or ambiguity. It is under such circumstances that there will be sustained participation on the part of the students in a task where "language is used for what it was designed for – communication" (Krashen 1982:1).

There are other issues that merit our attention when we attempt to explore the nature of communicative methodology. While the issue of communicative processes may look specifically at the skills of conversational interactions, in no way does the concept neglect the teaching of language skills. Nor does a communicative approach intend to dismiss basic language skills as unimportant to the dynamic nature of communicative processes. In fact, communicative methodology is committed to the view that language development is an integrated process and language skills are not mutually exclusive in the way they are acquired.

But, communicative methodology tries to produce real change in the learner, who will upon completion of a language program, not only be competent linguistically, but also be capable of using the target language effectively over a range of contexts and with a variety of functional purposes.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CHINA

Communicative methodology will undoubtedly serve as an alternative to the traditional way of English teaching in China. But, in the absence of a clear understanding of the rationale behind such a methodology, the change which is likely to come may occur sporadically.

In teaching, the modifications are likely to be superficial. The methods are likely to be inconsistent and applied in an *ad hoc* manner. Teaching may become capricious. In order to avoid such a situation, fundamental change towards communicative methodology presupposes some initial preparation.

In the first place, it is of prime importance that an academic atmosphere conducive to the understanding of the rationale behind communicative methodology be created. Furthermore, professional training courses and seminars should be made available to practicing teachers. Research efforts must be given prominence to discover the extent to which communicative methodology facilitates the communicative processes and contributes to the acquisition of a communicative capacity in English-language classrooms. Here classroom-oriented research merits serious consideration and must be incorporated into the existing graduate programs.

It is my belief that theoretical discussions and research studies will converge to influence the change towards communicative methodology as these truly hold the key to its realization. It is also my conviction that, with all those in our profession committed to advancing the state of the art in the teaching of English as a foreign language in China, communicative methodology, applied with classroom teachers' resourcefulness and ingenuity, will indeed work to the benefit of our students.

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Lee Spencer

AN ADJUNCT-MODEL ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PROGRAM IN BEIJING

The "adjunct-model" of language instruction provides a means of combining study in a content area with instruction in English. At the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, an experimental intensive English program based on an adjunct-model has been established.

The program offers a thirty-week course of study for 100 students, including graduate students from the Graduate School of the Academy of Social Sciences and researchers and scholars from various Institutes within the Academy. Students take an examination prior to admission and generally enter the program with a considerable amount of English study already behind them. Their level of English could be characterized as "high intermediate" to "advanced", with a fairly wide range among the student population.

Many different fields are represented among the students: economics, law, history, linguistics, philosophy, Marxism-Leninism, finance, world religion, literature, journalism, area studies, rural development, and a few others. The ages of the students also cover a wide range: from nineteen to over fifty.

The goal of the program is to prepare these students for international exchanges and study abroad. The curriculum, books and materials used at the Center are academic in nature. In addition to an academic focus, the program has a unique feature: content courses in English, taught by visiting professors from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), which students attend in conjunction with their English study. These courses are adjunct to the English program but are the central element in the design of the curriculum.

The aim of the Social Sciences English Language Center (SSELC) in offering content courses to students of English is to provide an "area of activity" to which English study is closely linked, since the goal of the students is not to learn English for its own sake, but for some other purpose.[1] The content course does this in two ways: by presenting information that is in itself of interest (the title of the course offered in the Fall of 1985 was "The U.S. as an Industrial Society") and by engaging students in authentic activities, for instance, writing papers and exams that require them to synthesize facts and ideas drawn from several sources, responding orally and in writing to material presented in lecture form, completing reading assignments too long to read word by word.

The term of study is 30 weeks. During this period, two 9-10 week content courses are offered, one near the beginning of the school year, in the fall, and the other in the spring after students have completed nearly twenty weeks of course work. The visiting professors teach in the areas of social studies and humanities. The fall 1985 course was in American history; the spring 1986 offering was in microeconomics. Students attend three hours of lecture per week and one hour of discussion led by English teachers; they complete readings assigned by the professor, write tests, exams, and papers. They are given a syllabus and reading assignments as well as study notes with significant facts and terms.

Concurrently, students participate in an English course entitled "Academic English Skills" (AES) which is designed to provide them with the English language skills needed to meet the requirements of the content course while building a foundation in academic English. This course gives instruction in the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, with an emphasis on reading academic texts and articles, expository writing, and listening to lectures. It draws heavily on the content course in order to provide students with the support they need to meet the demands of the content course. However, the class continues to meet when there is no content course in session, and the syllabus is repeated the following year so that it can be refined and revised.

AES meets eight hours per week. It is taught by one American and one Chinese teacher, who each spend six hours in the classroom, with the result that during four hours every week there are two teachers in the classroom. This arrangement allows for a great deal of flexibility so that teachers can easily adapt lesson plans to the varying requirements of the content course. For example, when the professor of the content course assigned a paper due in the sixth week of his course in November 1985, the AES teachers were able to devote most of their time to writing; whereas at the beginning of the term, more time was spent on listening.

The foundation of AES is, however, independent from the content course, and the use of substantial ESL texts and materials guarantees that control of the curriculum is maintained regardless of the specific nature of the content course being taught at any particular time.[2]

AES teachers attend content course lectures and have the schedule of assignments, tests, exams, and papers or the course. They prepare lesson plans following a general syllabus written in advance. Then, at weekly meetings with the entire academic staff, lesson plans are presented, the requirements of the content course are reviewed, and necessary revisions are made as the points of confluence are revealed. Further discussions may relate to issues such as the form of exam questions, the timing and length of papers, grading and evaluation, and student problems.

Well-balanced lessons utilize both the English materials and the elements of the content course, each augmenting the other according to the design of the English teacher. In this way, application of skills taught is immediate and built into the English program, as designed following an adjunct model.

The use of an adjunct model has other strengths to recommend it. It creates an environment that is highly motivating for students and teachers. Students appreciate the high quality of the content course and are stimulated intellectually, although there is an occasional student who doesn't want to read outside his own field. They are also acutely aware of the pertinence of their English language study. Teachers, too, respond positively; teaching is intense, but purposeful. An additional benefit is the large volume of authentic, natural language that is infused into the environment. Although it was clear that the professor had simplified his speech and the content of the lectures, there was still a large amount of English: 3 hours 1 lectures, 1 hour of discussion, meetings with the professor during his office hours, chance meetings in the hallway, reading and writing assignments, plus review sessions on audio and video tape. This volume of English is especially valuable in China, where students' exposure to native speakers and published materials in English is limited.

In order to use this "raw material" to its full advantage, however, students must have already reached a fairly high level of proficiency. Students whose listening ability is weak cannot understand the lectures; students whose speaking is limited do not participate in discussions; students who are slow readers cannot finish the reading assignments. This was found to be a problem among some of the students at SSELC. For this reason, it is important that students be admitted who can participate fully in their studies. Careful arrangement of the academic calendar may alleviate the problem for some students. English classes need to begin well in advance of the onset of the content course – listening ability especially can increase sharply in the first few weeks of intensive study.

Studies are planned and data is being collected and analyzed to assess the effectiveness of the program; however, from the initial response from students and faculty, it appears that there is a balance between the goals of the program, the needs of the students, and teacher resources through the adjunct-model curriculum. If care is taken in student selection, scheduling, and coordination through curriculum design, planning, and collaboration among faculty members, the adjunct model can offer an effective means of combining language study with study in a content area.

Notes

[1] Widdowson (Widdowson, 1983), quoted in Brinton and Snow (Brinton and Snow, 1985):

> In ESP we are dealing with students for whom the learning of English is auxiliary to some other professional or academic purpose. It is clearly a means for achieving something else and is not an end in itself . . . . . This being so, ESP is (or ought logically to be) integrally linked with areas of activity (academic, vocational, professional) which have already been defined and which represent the learners' aspirations. (p. 109-109)

[2] Texts:

1. Martin L. Arnaudet and Mary Ellen Barrett, *Approaches to Academic Reading and Writing,* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1984.
2. Sandra McKay and Lisa Rosenthal, *Writing for a Specific Purpose,* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1980.
3. Amy L. Sonka, *Skillful Reading,* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1981.

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L. Paige Whitley and Chen Xiangrong

TEAM TEACHING IN CHINA: ONE EXPERIENCE DESCRIBED

China faces a dilemma in the field of language instruction; namely, how to employ foreign experts in China without relying too heavily upon them, and how to train China's own language instructors without draining government funds by sending them overseas. Chinese and American teachers at the Academy of Social Sciences English Language Center (SSELC) are currently engaged in one method designed to solve this problem: *team teaching*. This article focuses upon team teaching as it is applied at the SSELC, its prerequisites, and the advantages it affords students and teachers alike.

BACKGROUND

The SSELC is a joint program between the Graduate School of the Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). The Center was set up in October 1985 and started instruction in November 1985 to 100 students admitted by entrance examination. Most of the students are from various institutes of the Academy who major in different social science fields. It is expected that many will pursue their studies in English-speaking countries later and will use English in their research fields. The focus of the Center is English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

The curriculum at the SSELC can be divided into three areas: an adjunct course, Academic English Skills (AES) and minicourses. The adjunct course is a content course taught by a visiting UCLA professor in a social science field and runs for a period of ten weeks each semester (described in the preceding article by Lee Spencer). The minicourses are taught individually by American and Chinese teachers. AES, which emphasizes the four English skills, is the academic aspect which assists the instruction of the adjunct course. Apart from the books and materials for AES, the success of this course weighs heavily upon the teaching conducted by pairs of teachers in the class.

The method of team teaching was presented and approved by both parties during the SSELC's preparatory stage from June through August 1985 at UCLA, when the curriculum was designed and lesson plans prepared. It was felt that team teaching neatly solved the problems facing the two parties and took advantage of the benefits of both – the cultural resources of the Chinese teachers and the language resources of the American teachers.

METHODS

There are five American teachers and four Chinese teachers at the SSELC. Students are divided into four sections, and each term a different pair of teachers conducts their AES class. The four teams consist of one American and one Chinese teacher who arrange the eight-hour per week AES schedule according to lessons calling for two teachers in the classroom, or one. Each teacher is responsible for *at least* six hours in class; therefore both teachers are required to be in the classroom at least four hours per week. Classes at SSELC are held Monday through Thursday. Friday mornings are devoted to staff meetings in which teachers preview the following week's lesson plans (written by different curriculum teams) and review any problems in the curriculum. When the adjunct course is in progress additional time is spent focusing upon the AES-adjunct synthesis.

OBSERVATIONS

Given the same lesson plans, different teams will emphasize the lessons differently. For example, Team A will work together on a listening lesson. One teacher will work with individual students while they listen to a tape and fill in a diagram; while the other teacher directs the class by questioning them and using the blackboard at the front of the room. Team B, on the other hand, may choose to use one teacher for the listening activity, but the team uses two teachers for that week's writing activity, taking advantage of the two "experts" in the class when doing inclass writing and editing. It is necessary for the teams to work out each week's schedule beforehand, so that both teachers are aware of the overall picture and prepare accordingly, thus ensuring the continuity necessary.

The extent to which team teaching is successful depends heavily upon the shared goals of the team partners and their agreement as to what "team teaching" is. Is team teaching a "shared" load or a "split" load? Teachers at SSELC believe, on the whole, that team teaching is a "shared" load, (though it is a given that the American teachers will do a bit more). This view means shared class time, shared correction of papers, and shared responsibility for preparations. It has been observed that classes tend to have a "schizoid" personality when they are "bounced" between two teachers who have no partnership or unity between them. Teachers must also be extremely careful not to encourage what may already exist concerning differing student expectations of native and non-native English speakers. Teachers contradiciting each other in the classroom undermines the unity they are attempting to create. We feel that one teacher taking the role of observer so as to be physically present in the class does *not* constitute real team teaching. (We must distinguish between the opportunities observation affords the Chinese teachers as a learning experience, and team teaching, when both teachers are working together.)

Teachers at the SSELC share similar professional backgrounds. One year prior to the start of their program, Chinese teachers from the Graduate School arrived at UCLA on visiting scholar status and observed and participated in classes in the Department of Teaching English as a Second Language. Moreover, both parties spent the summer of 1985 working together developing curriculum and preparing lessons. Such contact encouraged a familiarity and trust between the teachers, as well as professional confidence, as all had similar academic and professional exposure to applied linguistics and language instruction.

Other affective factors have been noticed among successful teams at SSELC, including a shared willingness to work hard and devotion of time and energy to the students' welfare.

ADVANTAGES

The advantages of team teaching became evident to us. Through the ten-week rotations of team partners and sections, students have equal time with native and non-native speakers of English, and are exposed to various accents. Students appreciate being exposed to different teaching styles and personalities, and learn of cultural perspectives not only from Americans, but also from Chinese teachers, all of whom have spent some time in the United States.

Teachers seem to show a higher degree of responsibility because of the interdependence between team members, and they can also rely on one another to share the paperwork load, especially in marking writing, the bane of all teachers!

Foremost among the advantages is that the SSELC provides a learning experience for the Chinese teachers. The SSELC has been established as a joint program for three to five years, after which it is expected to be self-sufficient; that is, there will be no further foreign experts or foreign funding. Chinese teachers are now learning the most up-to-date and innovative methodologies in order to carry on this "academic training ground" later.

CONSIDERATIONS

Certain considerations must be taken before attempting team teaching. One uncomfortable, though not prohibitive, factor at the SSELC is classroom size. If rooms are too small, a team of teachers plus twenty or more students can create a claustrophobic atmosphere. Another question is, how much time is necessary for "teacher orientation"? This past year was the first year for the SSELC and therefore a long period of time for curriculum development was required. What happened naturally within this period was that teachers had to analyze their professional goals while also analyzing the goals of the program together. This meant round-table meetings, pen-to-paper tasks as well as much discussion. This type of procedure is recommended to those who are considering team teaching, so that the foundation upon which it is built is indeed rock rather than quicksand!

Likewise, some type of cross-cultural workshop is strongly advised, especially for the foreigners coming to China. Both teaching groups need to go through the same kind of cross-cultural training that they expect their students to experience. This workshop should include everything from a brief introduction of the history of the institution in which the teachers would be teaching to a sociological perspective on intellectuals in China (or whatever student population group teachers would work with) as well as a tour of the environment in which teachers would work and live.

With reference to this group of American teachers at the SSELC, three had already taught academic English at other institutes in Beijing, while the other two had spent time in other parts of China teaching and studying. Three had proficiency in Mandarin itself, so that if necessary staff meetings could be conducted in both Mandarin and English. While such language training is not necessary to teach EAP, it did provide American teachers at the SSELC a feeling of confidence and understanding, both linguistically and culturally, for their work in Beijing.

The question remains, how long should such a "teacher orientation" be? It is felt that foreign teachers, upon arriving in China, need *at least* two weeks just to settle into life in China, before "hitting the books". Perhaps at the end of this period the benefits of meeting fellow teachers (foreign and Chinese) and going through the activities suggested above would offer all concerned the security of knowing in what direction they are going, and with whom.

Student and teacher response to team teaching at the SEELC to date has been positive. American teachers, though they have a slightly heavier workload, are satisfied, and Chinese teachers are also satisfied and working well not only on teaching teams but also on curriculum teams.

Richard W. Cooper

ENCOURAGING CRITICAL THINKING IN THE COMPOSITION CLASS

For the past few months I've been holding classes with a group of students who are scheduled to go to Canada in September to attend university. Most of our sessions have concentrated on study skills and essay writing, and it is in connection with the composition classes, in particular, that an interesting problem has emerged.

All EFL teachers have encountered this problem, but I'm not sure how many of us have had the time to consider its dimensions. We all address issues that can be grouped under the broad heading of sociolinguistics; our students ask us questions about studying in the West and we answer them. But there remains a large gap between the students' expectations and the reality which confronts them when they attend their first lecture at a Canadian university. In conversation with returned students (not all of whom have necessarily had positive academic experiences abroad) I've been surprised to discover that this gap still persists. Some students have ascribed their difficulties to the failure of the Canadian system to conform to *their* idea of what university training should be. This is a complicated issue, and undoubtedly a Chinese teacher's perspective on it would be more fruitful than my own. Nonetheless, I would like briefly to speculate on two aspects of this gap between expectation and experience and suggest some ways of narrowing it.

The sources of Chinese students' attitudes to the West arise from a complex interplay of cultural, political and sociological factors. Not all of these factors, from the Western point of view at least, have been positive. This can sometimes lead to the students' doubting the veracity of what we say about our own academic methodology, or worse yet, their tending to doubt the legitimacy of our methods of exposition and analysis which are, on the whole, more empirical than their own.

A recurrent theme in a typical EFL composition class has been the necessity to use examples; to avoid unsupported generalizations; to be on guard against irrelevant conclusions and false analogies. The name for all this, of course, is critical thinking, and I teach the acquisition of a similar perspective to my students in Canada. The difference for Chinese students is that they already have a different culturally-coherent perspective in place.

At its worst, their model sometimes translates into assumptions which, in English, have the character of prejudice or unsupported generalization; at its best, the Chinese model helps the students to define the conclusions they seek and to work toward them efficiently. In any event, the students' initial expectation is that writing a Chinese-style essay in English will satisfy the requirements in a North American classroom.

As a result, I've taken our composition class very much back to first principles. I am spending a lot more time than I had originally planned on oral work – examining social and economic issues from as many points of view as possible; having the students role-play in debates and distributing work sheets on social questions, for example, pornography, in which the students are required to break down the issue into as many causes and effects as they can and then question the empirical bases of these. I still have a few (male) students who aren't prepared to take things much farther than, "Pornography is very harmful to young men." However self-evident this may be from the Chinese point of view, its author will be in trouble in Canada unless he gets in the habit of seeing the issue as having many other components, not least among them, the ways in which pornography is harmful to young women.

I am spending less and less time on grammatical and editorial issues in class and I am becoming more and more convinced that academic success will not be won by the student who knows when to use an infinitive or gerund, but by the student who can solve a problem in economics, management or the humanities in a way that will be more culturally intelligible and acceptable to his professor.

There is, in addition, a second perhaps less tangible benefit to analytical practice. Chinese students seem, on the whole, to have very high expectations of their period of study abroad. The prevailing idea that technological or managerial "advances" can be readily absorbed and transplanted into the Chinese context has led students too easily to assume that the West is a kind of repository of formulae which, when appropriately exploited, can lead to rapid modernization in their own country.

Setting aside the problem of technology transfer, the notion that experience in Canadian universities or corporations will yield such neat and manageable packages of information suggests that the students have inaccurate models of expectation. In some cases this assumption might lead them to underestimate the difficulty and the degree of critical expertise required in the programs they are entering. As well, they may end up enrolling in unsuitable or superfluous courses.

In our agricultural project, for example, some of our forays into critical analyses are helping the students define their assumptions about modernization a little more cogently. We are discovering that the management of farms in both countries is similar. In this way we can temper their expectations into a more modest form in which their Canadian experience can be used to confirm some of what they already know rather than become a kind of "formula chase" – a search for complexities which may not exist and which, when the search fails, will lead to frustration and a sense that the time spent abroad was of little practical benefit.

Each field of study will have a different set of limitations on what the student can reasonably expect to acquire for the benefit of his country. As English teachers, we can hardly be expected to answer questions about these limitations in areas outside our expertise. But we *can* prepare our students so that they arrive with the critical ability to assess what they can reasonably achieve. If they have to write essays or reports, we can help them toward methods of presentation which will be more sympathetically received.

These are, of course, daunting goals, but for those of us who work in Canadian EFL programs, they seem to me to be important ones. Our majór aim may be to equip our students with linguistic competence, but they also need a perspective in which that competence can be placed. A good starting point, it seems to me, is the composition classroom.

Dr. Kim Echlin

CONCEPTUAL DIFFERENCES IN THE CHINESE AND ENGLISH ESSAY

Recently I met a young computer student who had learned all of his rudimentary English from computer manuals. Our conversation was a delightful and instructive example of the transfer of directly-translated concepts. After initial greetings he wanted to ask a question and wondered hesitantly if he could "open a file." When there was a misunderstanding he suggested that we "exit to system" and when forgetting a word he had once known he spoke of his "deletion." By the end of our talk I wondered if I should "turn off" or "unplug"!

The incident illustrated to me our inherent communicative ability to adapt different structures when we need to. The trick in this kind of communication is that the two interlocutors must both be conversant with the structure being employed. But to move up to more elegant expression, the student of language must eventually learn the conventions of the language.

When teaching English composition to Chinese students, the teacher will more easily understand potential problem areas if he or she knows some basic concepts about the Chinese essay and attitudes of students towards essay writing. Many teachers observe the following three weaknesses in early attempts at English essay writing: undue humility, copying or "plagiarism", and over-generalization and lack of focus.

The first two problems are easily understood and remedied once the foreign teacher is aware of the Chinese concept of essay-writing. Humility and citing the accepted opinion on any given topic are specifically taught as the correct way to write a paper.

The method dates back to the imperial examination system in which hopeful scholars wrote standardized exams for which they prepared by rote-learning of the classics and their accepted interpretations. These they would then repeat during the exam and were judged by the elegance of their Chinese language composition. The focus was more on the turn of the phrase than on the expression of an original idea since the latter could be construed as the candidate considering himself superior to the teacher whose autority was supreme.

Today's national exams are also based on rote-learning; therefore a foreign teacher should not be surprised when an entire class holds exactly the same opinion as Emily Bronte or Mark Twain. Knowing the "correct" interpretation is what has got your students into your class in the first place. The foreign teacher may gradually introduce "free discussion" and encourage expression of individual ideas. My experience has been that this is best accomplished in smaller groups with that time specifically labelled "free discussion." In this way students are confident that they won't appear to be trying to be superior to either the teacher or their classmates.

To tackle the third problem of over-generalization and lack of focus in essay writing, it's important to realize that the Chinese essay is generally one of two types: the "lun shuo wen" (discursive essay) and the "ji xu wen" (descriptive essay). Usually the essay opens with the "dian ti" which mentions the main topic right at the beginning. So far, so good, However, the style of mentioning the main topic marks the principal difference between Chinese and English essays. In Chinese it is appropriate to fit the specific topic into a wider field of knowledge and tradition using metaphoric language. Consider the following opening paragraph by an advanced student asked to discuss the concept of "fate" in *Oedipus Rex* and a modern short story.

Fate is an important theme in English literature. It comes down from Greek and Roman mythology. Greek and Roman mythology is the foundation of English and western literature. It offers an inexhaustible source for modern literature. Anyone who dips his pen in it can get inspiration to create or recreate newer and better works.

A paragraph later the student returned to the notion of fate . . .

One strategy I introduced was to insist that students use the phrase, "It is the purpose of this paper to discuss (analyze, define, prove . . .)" in the first paragraph. Students found this phrase at first to be very jarring to the ear[1]. It was altogether too direct. However, it did force them to introduce their topic immediately. In the following example, a student has used a combined Chinese-English introductory paragraph.

English literature sets its root in the soil of great Greek and Roman mythology from which it draws its nutrition. In every fruit on the tree of English literature there are elements obtained from this soil. Fate is one of these fruits. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to discuss fate and different attitudes towards fate in Oedipus Rex and "A Road to the Big City" by Doris Lessing.

Rather an original combination of the two styles!

The essential problem, then, is a question of style. Students need to gain familiarity with examples of western essays in which the thesis statement is expressed more directly and the organization of the essay is based on the rhetorical tradition of proving or disproving an idea.

My approach to this problem was to return to basics and to teach classical rhetoric. I found that the method worked well because Chinese students are accustomed to rule-oriented composition. They felt reassured to be able to identify three types of discourse used for three different purposes: forensic, epideictic, and deliberative. Then, we discussed the notion of audience and the three appeals the rhetorician may use: pathos, ethos, and logos. Finally we looked at the structure and organization of a persuasive speech using the six-part classical division: exordium, divisio, narratio, confirmatio, confutatio, and peroration. This structure is particularly useful in that it introduces the thought pattern of the western essay based on proving a point by considering pros and cons (confirmatio and confutatio).

Most Chinese students have no experience in writing an argumentative paper since the content of the discursive papers must be drawn from the accepted authority. To reinforce the principles, we examined together in class a selection of western essays to show how the thesis statement and rhetorical structural patterns organized the essays. The formal debate may also be used at this time to orally reinforce the structure of 'argument.'

Students were gratified to be able to identify clear patterns and to discover that the style they had initially considered 'crude' and 'overly-direct' was in fact rooted in an ancient and sophisticated tradition of eloquence. They felt a greater respect for the western essay when they understood that, like the Chinese essay, it should be beautiful. They began to appreciate the nature of the western essay when they understood the structural and argumentative devices as well as the elegant turn of phrase. The side benefit is that in composing the confirmatio and confutatio, students begin to think in new

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[1] I know many English teachers who would agree. However, it has been my experience both with native speakers and English as a Second Language students learning composition that the use of such a phrase forces them immediately to focus and organize. Later, once organizational techniques are clear they can substitute for the formula. Organization and coherence are the first steps out of which elegance may grow.

structures which not only help them to write better English prose, but also to think about and discuss English articles and literature more as a native speaker would do.

Every composition teacher will develop individual solutions to overcoming essay-writing difficulties appropriate to his or her class. However, foreign teachers will be able to tackle potential problem areas more directly once they realize that many of these difficulties spring from a different concept of the essay. Students will take pride in their ability to compose using an 'English style' and be happy to point out that because they understand the conventions of the English essay they are better able to bridge the cultural gap which points to high competence in the second language learner.

Ma Xiu Ying & Liu Bao Yi

COMMENT LIRE MIEUX ET PLUS VITE

D'après les expériences que nous avons acquises au cours de notre travail au Centre de formation linguistique Canada-Chine, la plupart des étudiants chinois ont des difficultés pour la lecture rapide. Après notre arrivée au Canada, nous avons consulté quelques livres sur des méthodes de lecture et nous nous sommes rendu compte que pour avoir une lecture à la fois rapide et efficace, il faut non seulement avoir un certain niveau de compétence dans une langue étrangère, mais aussi maîtriser certaines méthodes et habiletés. Nous essayons ici d'analyser les éléments qui freinent la lecture, de présenter quelques suggestions pour améliorer la lecture et d'étudier différentes techniques de lecture sélective.

ELEMENTS QUI FREINENT LA LECTURE

1. Mauvaises habitudes de lecture.
   Certains étudiants ont la mauvaise habitude de faire la lecture en épelant, en syllabant, en suivant lentement le texte du doigt pour ne pas perdre la ligne. De tels automatismes sont des facteurs qui ralentissent la lecture.
2. Confusion de mots semblables.
   Cette confusion de mots est très fâcheuse. Elle empêche une lecture rapide et efficace. En effet, elle oblige le lecteur à revenir en arrière et à lire deux fois la même chose avant de comprendre. Beaucoup d'étudiants doublent leur vitesse en éliminant ce défaut de confusion.

CHAMP DE FIXATION LIMITE

Quand nous lisons, nous avons l'impression que nos yeux se déplacent de façon continue le long de la ligne du texte. Mais cette impression est fausse. Nos yeux avancent par bonds.

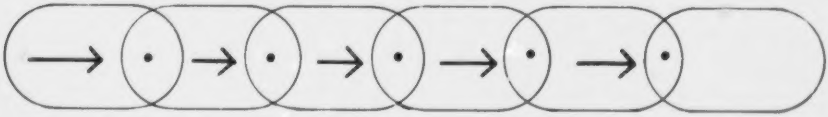
En effet, l'oeil ne peut voir que s'il est immobile. Il s'arrête donc pour enregistrer une portion de la ligne, puis il saute plus loin et s'arrête à nouveau, enregistrant la portion suivante, etc. En somme, quand on observe une personne en train de lire, on s'aperçoit qu'elle dévore le texte à petits coups, comme on mange un biscuit. Le processus est saccadé. C'est le défaut des lecteurs dont l'oeil n'est pas assez mobile. Il faut une bonne habileté perceptive pour enchainer de façon rapide et rythmée les différents arrêts de l'oeil.

Quand on regarde un mot simple, on peut lire l'ensemble du mot d'un seul coup d'oeil. Mais pour un mot plus long ou pour une phrase, il sera difficile d'embrasser tout le mot ou tout l'espace occupé par ces mots en un seul regard. L'oeil a ses limites. S'il faut à l'oeil deux arrêts pour lire un mot, il met deux fois plus de temps à lire. Un champ de fixation très limité nuit au rythme de la lecture.

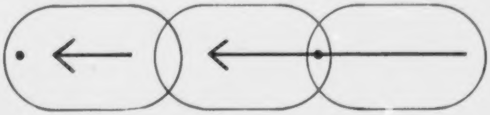
REPARTITION IRRATIONNELLE DU POINT DE FIXATION

Un des principes fondamentaux de la lecture rapide est, nous l'avons vu, d'augmenter le champ de chaque fixation de l'oeil de manière à absorber le texte par sections aussi larges que possible. Mais il ne suffit pas d'avoir un éventail de vision assez large, il y a autre chose qui explique qu'il y a des lecteurs lents et des lecteurs rapides. C'est le nombre d'arrêts par ligne de texte. Considérons les deux diagrammes suivants:

LECTEUR LENT:



LECTEUR RAPIDE:



Dans ces diagrammes, chaque fixation, où les yeux du lecteur s'arrêtent pour enregistrer les mots, est représenté par un point; les bonds successifs des yeux d'un point à l'autre sont représentés par les flèches; le faisceau actif de vision est figuré par des ellipses aplaties. Chez le lecteur rapide, ces ellipses sont harmonieusement disposées. Elles se recouvrent juste un peu aux deux bouts, là où la vision des mots est la moins précise. Chez le lecteur lent, au contraire, les ellipses du faisceau actif de vision se recouvrent abondamment; si bien que, sans s'en rendre compte, ce dernier repasse plusieurs fois sur le même mot. Son anxiété l'empêche d'aller de l'avant et de faire un plein usage de son éventail visuel.

La rapidité de la lecture est donc fortement liée à une répartition judicieuse des points de fixation sans que l'efficacité doive en souffrir.

SUBVOCALISATION

On apprend à lire en prononçant à haute voix les mots, au fur et à mesure que l'on reconnaît leur forme écrite. Nombre de lecteurs ont tendance à reprendre cette vieille habitude s'ils sont aux prises avec un texte qui leur paraît difficile. Ils ont gardé le besoin d'avoir un support auditif pour comprendre ce qu'ils lisent. Mais l'articulation d'un mot est beaucoup plus longue que sa simple perception; elle prend environ quatre fois plus de temps.

REGRESSION

Le défaut majeur qui risque de retarder l'adoption d'un bon rythme des fixations est l'habitude de revenir en arrière à tout propos pour vérifier un mot, une phrase, un nom. Ce défaut provoque de grandes pertes de temps. Non seulement il gaspille de l'énergie en obligeant à lire plusieurs fois la même chose, mais il rompt le rythme des fixations. L'oeil perd du temps à revenir en arrière et à retrouver l'endroit du texte d'où il était parti pour régresser.

QUELQUES SUGGESTIONS POUR AMELIORER LA LECTURE

La lecture efficace permet de repérer l'information désirée et de comprendre rapidement le message de l'auteur. Mais comment avoir une lecture à la fois rapide et efficace? Voici quelques suggestions:

1. Se défaire des habitudes qui ralentissent la lecture: syllaber, lire lettre à lettre, subvocaliser, suivre le texte du doigt, régresser.
2. Essayer de déchiffrer le maximum de mots d'un seul coup d'oeil, augmenter le champ de fixation, répartir judicieusement les points de fixation. En lecture, saisir du regard le plus grand nombre possible de mots à la fois améliore la vitesse et la compréhension.
3. Résister à la tentation de revenir en arrière et de terminer le paragraphe même si la signification N'apparait pas clairement.
4. Lire les paragraphes en essayant de comprendre la suite des idées et d'anticiper la suite. Il faut porter attention au début et à la fin des divisions (paragraphes ou chapitres): l'information a tendance à y être concentrée.
5. Lire rapidement, une première fois, un texte difficile; tenter ensuite d'assimiler chacun des détails lors d'une relecture.
6. Réserver quinze minutes par jour à un exercice de lecture. Commencer par des textes faciles et augmenter graduellement le rythme de la lecture et le niveau de difficulté des textes.

TECHNIQUES DE LECTURE SELECTIVE

Si un texte peut être lu très vite, pourquoi lire intégralement tous les mots de ce texte? Pourquoi ne pas pratiquer ce qu'on appelle la lecture sélective? Grâce à cette technique, nous allons tout de suite à l'essentiel. Avant d'étudier un texte au microscope, on peut d'abord le reconnaître dans son ensemble. Cela se révèle d'une grande utilité dans la pratique. Voici quelques techniques de lecture sélective.

1. Recherche des mots-clés.
   Bien que la redondance des textes écrits en français soit assez importante, tous les textes ont leurs mots-clefs. Il est non seulement plus rapide, mais aussi plus efficace pour la compréhension du message de l'auteur de négliger les mots redondants et de s'attarder uniquement aux mots-clefs.

2. Ecrémage.

Le principe fondamental de l'écrémage est la réduction du nombre de mots lus sans que la compréhension générale du texte en souffre. Il s'agit d'éliminer le travail inutile, de concentrer l'effort là où il est plus urgent d'augmenter l'acuité de la compréhension. Un lecteur qui a maitrisé la technique de l'écrémage sait s'arrêter sur des détails.

La technique de l'écrémage est efficace quand on se conforme aux trois règles fondamentales suivantes:

a) *Trouver rapidement l'idée principale du texte.*

Dans un texte clair et bien écrit, l'auteur expose souvent son idée principale dès le premier paragraphe et il résume la conclusion qui en découle dans le dernier paragraphe. Les points d'alerte principaux se trouvent l'un au début, l'autre à la fin du texte. Quand on ne trouve pas l'idée principale dans le premier paragraphe, on peut abandonner ce paragraphe à mi-chemin et sauter au second paragraphe. On y trouvera peut-être ce qu'on cherche. Quand on cherche l'idée principale d'un texte, toutes les techniques sont permises, à condition d'aller vite: la régression, par exemple, y est fort bien vue. Dans l'écrémage, les yeux se promènent partout où l'attention les appelle, de-ci, de-là, jusqu'à ce qu'ils aient trouvé le mot-clef.

b) *Lire à fond les phrases importantes.*

Un texte est jalonné de phrases importantes qui lui donnent son sens. Quand nous les avons reconnues, nous devons leur consacrer le temps nécessaire à bien les enregistrer. Elles méritent une attention véritable.

c) *Passer rapidement sur les phrases de détail.*

Les phrases importantes sont entourées de phrases qui apportent des informations complémentaires. Ces phrases-là sont secondaires pour la compréhension des idées de l'auteur. Elles servent de transition pour passer d'une idée à l'autre, ou de support à l'idée qu'elles entourent. Les unes apportent des faits complémentaires utiles, les autres soutiennent le fil de la lecture par un détail amusant, une idée annexe, une enjolivure ou un rappel, une citation qui embellissent le texte. La lecture sélective préfère ignorer ces détails, pour être certaine que l'esprit assimilera l'essentiel. Les détails sont réservés pour les moments où on a le temps de tout lire. On peut toujours y revenir quand on a compris l'essentiel.

REPERAGE

Dans le repérage, il ne s'agit plus de parcourir tout un texte en le suivant de l'oeil, mais d'approfondir un seul point, en sautant tout le reste.

Avec l'écrémage, on abordait le texte sans idée préconçue, sans savoir ce qu'il fallait y chercher. Ici, le but est différent: on aborde le texte en sachant d'avance ce qu'on veut y trouver. On cherche une information spéciale, celle-là et aucune autre.

a) Quand faut-il repérer?

La technique de repérage s'applique chaque fois qu'une question limitée se pose, dont la réponse est contenue dans un texte. Alors, le reste du texte importe peu: il faut découvrir où se cache la réponse.

b) Que faut-il repérer?

Dans la technique du repérage, le plus important est de bien savoir ce que l'on cherche.

c) Où faut-il repérer?

On trouve au début ou à la fin de certains ouvrages, une table des matières détaillée indiquant les titres et sous-titres des domaines traités. Toutes les fois que le mot-chef adopté se rencontre dans un de ces titres, on se reporte à la page indiquée, où l'on souligne les phrases contenant le sujet étudié. On arrive ainsi rapidement à localiser le renseignement cherché.

d) Index.

Dans d'autres ouvrages, on juge trop lourds les titres et sous-titres détaillés. Une façon de les alléger, sans perdre l'utilité du repérage, consiste à établir à la fin de l'ouvrage un index des noms et des mots importants contenus dans l'ouvrage, avec l'indication des différentes pages où ils sont mentionnés. Ce genre de petit dictionnaire abrégé rend les plus grands services dans la technique du repérage.

e) Synonymes

Il faut ici repérer les mots qui ont le même sens que les mots-clefs.

CONCLUSION

Pour rendre la lecture plus rapide et plus efficace, il faut établir un plan de lecture, fixer un horaire, éviter les différents éléments ralentissant le rythme de lecture, suivre les suggestions données et recourir aux diverses techniques de lecture sélective.

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Laura E. Ho

IMPROVING ORAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS

This paper concerns the preparation of technical condidates for the English Oral exam required by the Canada/China Language Training Centre. The findings are based on interviews with many of these students over a two semester period and on work done to improve their overall oral performance.

The oral examination used at the CCLTC is graded on an eight-band scale of communicative performance, where O = beginner and 8 = native speaker (see Appendix I). Candidates are rated by a panel of three scorers and the average score is recorded. Factors evaluated include listening comprehension, accuracy of language use, range, fluency and pronunciation. Required oral scores vary with student goals and the exit profile needed to qualify to study in Canada.

My initial goal in working with students' oral language at the CCLTC was to improve their prounciation. It quickly became apparent, though, that most students showed little interest in working strictly on prounciation, stress and intonation. Some had had pronunciation courses previously but all stated that they wanted specifically to improve their overall performance on the oral examination. They did not link pronunciation with score improvement. Seeking to clarify how they felt they could affect their oral performance, I began to ask questions that might reveal specific problems.

Problems described by students included:

1. Insufficient knowledge of what and *how* the oral exam measures.
2. Incorrect information about terminology, e.g. fluency was perceived to mean speaking quickly.
3. Lack of information about expected behaviour during interviews.
4. Insufficient opportunities to practice communicative interaction techniques and develop production strategies.
5. Insufficient opportunities for extended speaking practice.
6. Poor motivation — measurable improvement requires too much effort.

Teachers were also contacted regarding the oral language problems of their students. Generally speaking, most oral language difficulties were attributed to a need for pronunciation, stress and intonation. Teachers agreed that student motivation to improve these features was low and that it was difficult and time-consuming to attempt change in the limited classtime available during a semester of 10-12 weeks.

My hope in working with students at the CCLTC was to identify and develop specific teaching strategies to address both the anxieties and the oral language needs expressed by students. Some of the problems — information gaps or misconceptions — for example, could be resolved relatively quickly. Behavioural or strategic needs and communication skills, however, required more concentrated effort.

The approach which I have been developing stresses the role of the learner as an active listener, as a contributor, as a monitor of his own production. First a needs assessment is performed. Students describe their experience during the previous oral examination and share their questions, concerns, and personal needs for oral language development. This information is taperecorded for two purposes. First, to provide a reference point for determining progress and second, to obtain a speech sample from each candidate.

Then, I review the criteria evaluated during the oral interview (see Appendix I) and describe how various factors (fluency, range, pronunciation) affect overall production. Students ask questions and begin to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses in terms of the criteria used during the examination. This allows them to begin to plan personal strategies for improvement.

Finally, I identify common problems expressed by the students and proceed as follows:

1. Assign students a task to prepare for the next session. It could be a task about their job; an argument based on a current problem; a roleplay, and so forth.
2. Meet with students and record them. Encourage them to experiment, using language they have learned in class. Make notes during the session concerning the use of language, useful structures, vocabulary, pronunciation problems.
3. Review both tape and notes with students, encouraging them to help each other with correction and to improve their linguistic flexibility and their range. Sometimes this means discussing how to organize thoughts for particular purposes — comparison, challenge, agreement, comment restatement, and so on.
4. Review the lesson's results, noting successes and weaknesses. Focus on practice points for each individual for the interval between lessons.
5. Students should practice daily with their study partner, and experiment with new language, playing with ideas.

In this way, students address, on a regular basis, the qualities and problems of their own performance, based on their performance and their goal.

Practice interviews simulating examination conditions can also be scheduled during oral workshop sessions, to provide practice and to offer feedback. If the initial interview assesses needs, then the practice interview can be used to monitor real progress in relation to the goal of improving oral performance during examinations. Students should understand and demonstrate appropriate interview behaviour during this practice session, including making eye contact, requesting clarification, if needed, responding adequately to questions, producing varied and interesting responses. Their practice should be evaluated using the same oral interview scale they will later be judged by.

The techniques outlined in this paper are not revolutionary, but they do provide the basis for a direct response to students' oral English needs and to their motivation for improvement. It is my hope that other teachers will become involved, at the CCLTC and elsewhere, in the teaching of, and research into, oral language improvement strategies.

APPENDIX I

Language Profiles

Band 1 – 1.5

L.C.: needs frequent repetitions, may even need or request translation
Accur: abundant errors that generally confuse meaning
Range: very limited vocabulary, limited to very basic topics. Only one register
Fluency: searches for words, except for memorized segments
Pronun: almost always distracting and requiring compensation on part of interviewer

Band 2 – 2.5

L.C.: understands only very simple predictable questions
Accur: meaning frequently obscured by errors
Range: adequate for basic information but experiences difficulty with other topics
Fluency: handles a few frequently occurring phrases without hesitation. Otherwise speaks haltingly.
Pronun: often distracting and requires compensation.

Band 3 – 3.5

L.C.: usually understands the question or is able to identify source of confusion and ask for clarification
Accur: language use problems obvious and sometimes impede communication
Range: OK in simple conversations dealing with predictable topics but lacks flexibility in handling topics outside this range; still limited mainly to simple constructions
Fluency: can maintain conversation on fairly simple topics without too many annoying hesitation
Pronun: only sometimes distracting or requiring compensation

N.B. Must meet this description fully in order to satisfy exit standards.

Band 4 – 4.5 (Modest/Competent)

L.C.: understands most of what is said to him or her in a one-on-one situation and responds appropriately without undue hesitation
Accur: language use problems occur, but only rarely impede communication
Range: vocabulary adequate for discussing a variety of topics, from predictable to more general interest areas. Varied sentence structure
Fluency: shows independence and flexibility. Hesitations are rare and not annoying. Able to produce extended responses to most questions (where appropriate)
Pronun: rarely distracting or requiring compensation

Band 5 or above

L.C.: understands readily both predictable questions, as well as those relating to a variety of topics. Only occasionally requires clarification.
Accur: language use problems are minor and do not impede communication
Range: vocabulary, appropriate to most topics. Comfortable and competent in dealing with most topics. Effective use of sentence structure.
Fluency: interacts spontaneously with few linguistic distractions.
Pronun: not distracting or requiring compensation

Chen Xiangrong

USING NEWS BROADCASTS IN 'NEWS IN MEDIA'

News in Media is one of the mini-courses at the English Language Center of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (SSELC) which is designed to enable students to comprehend main ideas in radio news broadcasts and news stories in newspapers. The course lasts six to eight weeks, and meets three hours each week. One hour is devoted to techniques of newspaper reading and selected readings of news reports and the other two to listening to news. This paper focuses on listening to radio news.

Chinese students who are accustomed to a grammar-translation method of instruction find their ability to understand actual spoken English quite low in comparison to their reading comprehension. Most of them are usually stunned by the speed at which regular news broadcasts are read. Therefore, the course begins with listening to "Special English" programs from Voice of America (VOA), which are read at a slower speed and which contain simplified vocabulary. These are broadcast regularly in China. The teacher records the ten-minute news program one or two days before class so that students hear up-to-date news.

The teaching process is divided into three stages. At the initial stage the tape recording is played from beginning to end for the first time to give students a rough impression of the news after they have been given key words and some background information. The recording is then replayed sentence by sentence. Whenever students have difficulty in understanding, the tape is stopped and difficult words or phrases are explained either by the teacher or other students. Before class is over, the tape is played once again from beginning to end. In this way students can comprehend almost every word. This stage covers about eight hours including some time spent on other interesting and useful programs in "Special English" such as "The Science Report" and "Words and Their Stories."

At the second stage students are given normal VOA news broadcasts to listen to. Now that they are familiar with and used to VOA news broadcasts in "Special English" in terms of American pronunciation and intonation and relevant vocabulary, they are well-prepared and ready for fast broadcasts. This time students are provided with comprehension questions or cloze passages in addition to key words and background information to help them identify the main ideas. While listening to the news, they are required to take notes. After they hear each news item twice, they are asked to give the main ideas and discuss the news. Sometimes students are required to transcribe a short broadcast to the best of their ability. About five hours are spent on this kind of listening practice.

At the third stage, we use recordings of "World News Tonight" from the United States, with more vivid and rapid native speaker speech. Again, key words and background information are provided first. Then students hear key sentences with a fill-in-the-blank exercise. After that, they listen to the actual news. Answering questions or summarizing news items orally follows. The tape is then played once again and a discussion ensues. Guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words from context is encouraged at all three stages.

When television news broadcasts from abroad become available in the future, they will be incorporated into the course; they will surely appeal very much to students since they will not only hear the announcers but also watch them and live news reporting which will be easier for them to understand.

Up to now, three sections of students have taken this course. A general survey conducted among them shows that almost all the students appreciate the value of improving their listening comprehension through taped news broadcasts for three reasons. First, they are exposed to authentic language. Their enthusiasm is obvious. Their listening comprehension is developed so that they can apply it to other situations; they can continue to develop their listening ability after the end of their formal English study. They are also involved in a variety of activities in class. Discussing news and reading after the announcer when the tape is played for the last time in class helps students improve their oral English and pronunciation. Note-taking skills are practiced and students will be better prepared when they have to take notes during lectures given by visiting professors. Listening to news programs in combination with newspaper reading enriches their vocabulary, since many words are encountered more than once.

Second, using news broadcasts in the ESL classroom has proven to be effective at SSELC, using the gradual improvement method of teaching and providing students with prelistening activities and supplementary materials such as comprehension questions, cloze passages and lists of key words. Towards the end of this course students are no longer overwhelmed by authentic speech, and in particular by high speed news breadcasts.

Third, news broadcasts are a positive influence in the ESL classroom and listening them is conducive to acquisition of English and world knowledge as well. Moreover, it is fun for teachers to teach this course, even though it is time-consuming to record news broadcasts and prepare materials and explanations of news items. The work is rewarding in that students make rapid progress in listening comprehension. One student who had been trying to comprehend VOA news broadcasts for five years said he was able to solve the problem in only a few weeks.

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Pierre Demers and Micheline Tremblay are both French teachers at the CCLTC, and they edited, typed and proof-read the article in French on reading skills. Lynn Garrett contributed heroic efforts at the word-processor for the English-language texts.

April, 1988
avril, 1988

Volume 3, Number 1
Tombe 3, Numero 1

Monday Morning Lundi matin

A magazine for language teachers in China

Revue pour les professeurs de langues en Chine

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MONDAY MORNING/LUNDI MATIN

A MAGAZINE FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN CHINA

REVUE POUR PROFESSEURS DE LANGUES EN CHINE

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 1, APRIL 1988

CANADA/CHINA LANGUAGE CENTRE
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PREFACE

Dear Readers of Monday Morning/Lundi matin:

This third issue of Monday Morning/Lundi matin is the first issue produced by the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) from its new home at Beijing Normal University.

The CCLC is pleased to be able to provide once again a forum for reflection on language teaching in China. This issue, which contains articles by Chinese, Canadian, and American teachers demonstrates the diverse but cooperative nature of language teaching in China.

Producing this journal required hard work, commitment, creativity, and contributions from many teachers. I would like to express my gratitude to the editor Moira De Silva, the typist Jane Magee, and the contributors who together produced Volume 3 Number 1 of Monday Morning/Lundi matin.

Helen Vanwel
Canadian Director
Canada/China Language Centre

PREFACE

Chers lecteurs, chères lectrices,

Ce troisième numéro de Monday Morning/Lundi matin est le tout premier réalisé dans les nouveaux locaux du Centre linguistique Canada/Chine (CLCC) à l'Université normale de Beijing.

Une fois de plus, le CLCC est heureux de pouvoir vous offrir cet outil de réflexion sur l'enseignement des langues en Chine. Ce numéro, qui regroupe des contributions de professeurs chinois, canadiens et américains, illustre à la fois la diversité et l'esprit de coopération dans le domaine de l'enseignment des langues en Chine.

La production de ce journal est le fruit de longues heures de travail, de collaboration et de créativité. J'aimerais remercier tout particulièrement les personnes qui ont participé à la réalisation de Monday Morning/Lundi matin, Volume 3, numéro 1 : l'éditeure, Moira de Silva, la secrétaire de rédaction, Jane Magee, et tous les professeurs qui ont collaboré à la rédaction des articles.

Helen Vanwel
Directrice canadienne
Centre linguistique Canada/Chine

EDITORIAL

We are happy to publish our third issue of Monday Morning/lundi matin. We had hoped to have it published by the end of 1987 but during the 1986-87 academic year the Canada/China Language Centre moved to its present location at Beijing Normal University so much extra time was spent in packing and unpacking. In order to compensate for being late we have made this issue twice the normal size.

Articles are selected for their relevance to the language teaching situation in China. In this issue we are delighted to publish articles from our teaching colleagues in many different parts of the country.

We have selected articles on a wide variety of topics in EFL. We welcome the many practical teaching ideas as these are always appreciated by practising teachers. Susan Murray's article on vocabulary acquisition is an excellent example of a simple but effective way of increasing students' vocabulary. Another practical and successful idea is Sidney Frank's topic for debate. Han Hong Ju outlines some communicative activities for the reading class. Lou Zheng gives step by step instructions on how to set up a global reading course. Stephen Bahry and Huang Qian describe how to adapt textbook materials so that the content is relevant to the students. Elizabeth-Anne Malischewski's article on teaching video provides many different ways of using video in the classroom.

In addition to all these practical teaching suggestions there are articles which are beneficial to teachers working in a cross cultural situation. Lin Yuyin highlights problem areas in communication between Chinese and Americans and gives strategies for eliminating misunderstanding. Charlene Polio's article on teacher evaluation of lesson plans shows how these can be used as an effective means of increasing communication between Chinese and American teachers. Patricia Walters has discovered that there are differences in perception between American teachers and Chinese students and these may interfere with the progress made by students in the EFL class.

Another important concern which is addressed is that of motivation. Zhou Guangfu discusses why this is of prime importance in the EFL class and gives ways of keeping students motivated.

We look forward to receiving feedback and comments from our readers. If you would like your college to be on our mailing list please let us know. We would also appreciate receiving contributions for our next issue of Monday Morning/lundi matin which should be published in the winter of 1988.

Moira E. M. de Silva.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE CANADA/CHINA LANGUAGE CENTRE

What is the Canada/China Language Centre?

The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) at Beijing Normal University is one of two components of the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program managed for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) by Saint Mary's University in Halifax.

The other component of this project is the five Regional Orientation Centres at various universities across Canada. The Project was established in 1983 by CIDA. The goal of the project is to provide, in China and in Canada, language and cultural preparation for Chinese professionals who receive work/study, technical or academic training in Canada and to contribute to the improvement of capacity in the teaching of English and French in China. The Regional Orientation Centres also provide orientation for Canadian professionals going to work in China.

What does the CCLC do?

Every year the CCLC administers two language proficiency examinations so that candidates eligible for study in Canada or at the CCLC can be identified. Those eligible for study at the CCLC follow an eighteen week programme in English or French. The CCLC is a cooperative programme with Canadian and Chinese teachers working together in teaching teams. By working closely together and through formal teacher training the staff develop communicative language teaching programmes which meet the students' language needs.

The Language Programme

The programme at the CCLC is based on the communicative approach to language learning and teaching. The communication needs of the learners are identified first and these form the basis of the learning objectives. The language that the trainees will need for their educational or job related activities and social survival in Canada is stressed. The emphasis is on students being able to use language for the communication tasks they need to carry out in real life. In order to make the teaching interesting and suitable for the individual learning styles of the students the teachers use a variety of methods. The classroom is learner centred with the teacher acting as a facilitator or manager of learning. Students often role play situations and work in groups or pairs.

DESCRIPTION DU CENTRE LINGUISTIQUE CANADA/CHINE

Le Centre linguistique Canada/Chine, c'est quoi?

Le Centre linguistique Canada/Chine (CLCC) de l'Université normale de Beijing est l'une des deux composantes du programme linguistique et culturel Canada/Chine. Le programme est administré par l'Université Saint Mary's de Halifax pour le compte de l'Agence canadienne de développement international (ACDI). Les cinq centres régionaux d'orientation, que l'on retrouve dans diverses universités à travers le Canada, forment l'autre composante. Créé en 1983 par l'ACDI, le project a pour but d'offrir, tant en Chine qu'au Canada, une formation linguistique et culturelle à des professionnels chinois. Ces derniers font des stages d'études et de travail au Canada, participent à des programmes de formation technique ou complètent des études universitaires. De plus, le CLCC a pour mandat de contribuer à l'amélioration de la qualité de l'enseignement du francais et de l'anglais en Chine. Quant aux Centres régionaux d'orientation, ils offrent également des stages d'orientation à des professionnels canadiens appelés a travailler en Chine.

Que fait le CLCC?

Chaque année, le CLCC fait passer des tests d'évaluation linguistique afin de recruter des candidats pour les programmes d'études au Canada ou au CLCC. Les personnes admissibles suivent un cours d'immersion de 18 semaines en francais ou en anglais. Le CLCC a adopté une formule coopérative regroupant des professeurs canadiens et chinois au sein d'une même équipe de travail. Une étroite collaboration et un programme spécial de formation pédagogique permettent de développer des méthodes d'enseignement qui répondent aux besoins des étudiants(es).

Le programme d'enseignement des langues

Le programme d'enseignment du CLCC a recours à une approche communicative pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la langue seconde. En premier lieu, le centre identifie les besoins de l'étudiant(e) afin de déterminer les objectifs d'apprentissage. Le CLCC met l'accent sur un vocabulaire de base qui permettra au stagiaire de fonctionner lors de son séjour au Canada, que ce soit dans le cadre d'un programme d'études, en milieu de travail, ou dans toute situation de la vie courante. On tient à ce que l'étudiant(e) puisse assimiler un vocabulaire qui lui permettra de fonctionner lorsqu'il (elle) sera plongé(e) dans une situation réelle. Pour rendre l'enseignment dynamique et pour s'assurer que les cours répondent bien aux besoins des étudiants(es), les professeurs utilisent différentes méthodes d'enseignement. La salle de classe devient un véritable laboratoire d'apprentissage où sous la direction du professeur les étudiants(es) recréent des situations. Ils travaillent souvent en groupe ou en équipe.

DOING MORE THAN SITTING WATCHING: VIDEO IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

Elizabeth-Anne Malischewski

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In the context of communicative language teaching, language is seen as being governed not only by linguistic rules (grammar, phonology, etc) but also by sociolinguistic rules (setting, topic, relationship between speakers, etc), which determine the effectiveness, appropriateness and perceived meaning of any chunk of language. The use of video films is extremely useful in dealing with the inseparability of these two dimensions as it is the nearest teachers and students get to studying language in a natural, historical, geographical and social context.

Students viewing video films need to live dangerously, guess, and use their imagination in order to make any sense at all of most films. Students should prepare thoroughly by doing exercises *before* viewing a film. They can check their answers and modify them when actually watching the film. Some exercises should be read before the film, and completed during the film. In this way we are providing "hooks" in the film for the students to catch onto.

Before any film, some type of introduction should be given. This can be done in a variety of ways from presenting the historical context (e.g. the history of the Algerian revolution and the OAS before "Day of the Jackal") to playing a song from a musical film. The following is a case in point:

Example One

Coal Miner's Daughter

starring Sissy Spacek with Tommy Lee Jones and Phyllis Bown

Oh, I was born a coal miner's daughter
In a cabin on a hill in Butcher Hollow
We were poor, but we had love.
That's the one thing Daddy made sure of.
He shovelled coal to make a poor man's dollar.

Daddy loved and raised eight kids on a miner's pay.
Mommy scrubbed our clothes on a washboard every day.
I seen her fingers bleed.
To complain, there was no need.
She'd smile in Mommy's understanding way.

In the summer time, we didn't have shoes to wear,
But in the winter time, we'd all get a brand new pair
From a mail-order catalogue.
Money made from selling a hog,
Daddy always managed to get the money somewhere.

Yeah, I'm proud to be a coal miner's daughter.
I remember well the well where I drew water.
The work we done was hard.
At night we'd sleep 'cause we were tired,
But I never thought of leaving Butcher Hollow.

Well, a lot of things have changed since way back then,
And it's so good to be back home again.
Not much left, but the floor.
Nothing lives here anymore.
Just the memories of a coal miner's daughter.

This song, and this film, are based on the life of Loretta Lynn, one of the stars of American country music. Loretta Lynn really was a coal miner's daughter from the poorest state in the United States, Kentucky. Because of the terrible backwardness of this region, it is one of the few places in America where a way of speaking has developed that is difficult to understand even for most Americans. For example, in Loretta's song above, she manages to make "daughter" rhyme with "Butcher Hollow", the name of her hometown. In "standard" American English, it is hard to make "hollow" rhyme with anything. Can you think of some words that rhyme with "hollow"? There is another example of "non-standard" rhyme in the second to the last verse. *Find it and underline it.* There are also two grammatical mistakes in the way Loretta uses tenses. *Can you find them?*

It is very common for teachers to present films and give comprehension exercises to be done after the viewing. However, many students "tune out" after a short length of time from the sheer effort of having to concentrate on a foreign language for such a long time. Also, if some students do not understand certain important elements of the story, they may lose interest. One way of handling this problem is to design "participatory exercises" for the students to do during the film. When students see a certain action or thing on the screen, they must "react" to it. When Eliza eats chocolate for the first time in "My Fair Lady", the students can be asked to say "mmm". When they see the avalanche in "Iceman", they could be asked to gasp. They might be asked to hiss when they see the snake planted in Poirot's bathroom to kill him in "Death on the Nile". These are fun, but also serve the function of teaching typical reactions to certain situations. They also serve to wake up those who have tuned out.

This type of exercise can be used to ensure that everyone gets the important information in the film. It is necessary, for example, to know who the important characters in the film are. The students could be asked to say "John Wayne" the first time they see the one-eyed marshall in "True Grit". They could be asked to say "Lebel" when they first see the police commissioner who is supposed to be the best detective and who will head the hunt for the "Jackal". They could be asked to say "Timothy Hutton" the first time they see an important anthropologist dressed in furs like an Eskimo.

These exercises may also serve to emphasise important events in films. The students may be asked to say "oh, no", when Eliza Doolittle speaks with a beautiful, high-class English accent at the Ascot races (but about subjects which high society does not discuss!) They may be asked to raise their right hands when the coach accepts to help Abrahams run faster in "Chariots of Fire". They may be asked to raise their left hands when Joanna leaves her husband in "Kramer vs Kramer". Since the students will have read the whole list of what they must do during the film before the actual viewing of the film, they will have a list of the main events. If someone has not understood the film, at least he or she will know what has happened when the other students react.

In evaluating the exercises we usually do with films, the students I have taught have consistently said that these exercises aided comprehension, and that they were the most useful of any exercises we do. Many students like to learn the correct pronunciation and intonation to use, and many put a lot of emotion into their reactions. I have also found that students begin to react to elements in the film which are not on the list. One student cried out, "Lucky woman!" when Freddie gave Eliza flowers in "My Fair Lady" and another one said, "Not a perfect man" when she saw the Neanderthal in "Iceman". All of them use "oh, no" as the tension mounts.

It is sometimes a good idea to focus on certain important scenes before the students see the film. This ensures that the students will understand the scene when they see it, and it also makes them pay attention to the particular language used to *do* something. The following exercise from the same film practises inferring meaning from context. The context is summarized, an expression presented, and a list of possible meanings given. The students do not have to write, since they are supposed to be practising how to understand.

Example Two

1.

The moonshiner wants Doo to work for him, because of his courage and also because of his automobile. To persuade Doo, he tells him:

> "You've got three choices in front of you: coal mine, moonshine, or moving on down the line".

He means:

(a) Doo can dig coal, make whiskey, or work on the railroad.
(b) Doo can dig coal, make whiskey, or work for the phone company.
(c) Doo can dig coal, make whiskey, or leave Butcher Hollow.
(d) Other________________________________

2.

Loretta and Doo separate, and Loretta returns to her parents' house. Loretta's father greets her, picks her up in his arms, and says, "Girl, I b'lieve married life is makin' you fat!" Loretta's mother says, "Oh Lord, no!" This is because:

(a) She is afraid Loretta will be too fat to find another man.
(b) She is teasing Loretta.
(c) She understands that Loretta is going to have a baby.
(d) Other:______________________________

Another way of doing more or less the the same exercise is not to summarize the context, but rather to present a dialogue which acts as the context. The following exercise was prepared for "Love Story".

Example Three

In the library at Jenny's college, Radcliffe, Oliver and Jenny meet for the first time. They also fight for the first time. Use arrows to show Jenny's answers to what Oliver says. Look at the example first:

(Oliver wants a book. Jenny is working as a librarian.)

OLIVER	JENNY
Do you have *English Society in the Middle Ages?*	That's what makes you stupid!
Listen, Harvard students are allowed to use the Radcliffe library.	Oh no, Preppie. I'm smart and poor.
Listen, I need that damn book!	Don't you have your own library at Harvard?
What makes you so sure I went to prep school?	Would you please watch your language, Preppie?
You're wrong. Actually, I'm smart and poor.	You look stupid and rich.
What makes you so smart?	I wouldn't go for coffee with you.
Listen, I wouldn't ask you to.	I'm not talking about what you're allowed to do, Preppie. I'm talking about what is right and fair. You fellows have five million books. We only have a few thousand.

Not only does the above exercise focus on the language of the scene, but more importantly it focuses on the special type of "smart talk" used throughout the film. This language is indicative of the type of people Oliver and Jenny are and of the type of relationship which they will eventually have. It is important to the general comprehension of the film. Later, the students could also be asked to find other exchanges of "smart talk" in the film.

When students become more adept at inferring meaning from context, they can be asked to listen for certain sentences in the film, and while watching decide upon the meaning. The following examples are from an exercise pepared for the television series "Roots".

Example Four

Read the following sentences which you will hear in the film. Try to choose the statement which best describes what they really mean *before* you see the film. When you watch the film, listen for these sentences, and check your answers.

"You've been a good boy, Kunta. You've been a very good son."

(a) You have done something heroic.
(b) I like you.
(c) Good-bye.
(d) Other: ____________________

"As I see it, Sir, it's good for them. We're taking them, giving them work, clothes, food. And we're taking them to a Christian country, don't forget. We're saving them from their own kind. They're all cannibals, you know."

(a) Slavery is good for black people.
(b) Slavery is good for white people.
(c) Slavery is evil and must be abolished.
(d) Other: ____________________

"Prosperity, captain! What harm can there be in that?" "I wonder very much if we really want to know, Sir, what harm there may be in prosperity."

(a) The first man is against slavery; the second is for slavery.
(b) The first man is for slavery; the second against.
(c) The first man is for slavery; the second is not very sure.
(d) Other: ______________________________

In certain films, it is necessary to emphasize the particular variety of English used. "Love Story" exemplifies what might be termed as "college talk". The following exercise teaches some "college talk" in the context of the scene used in Example Three.

Example Five

Preppie	:	(a)	intelligent, clever (American English only)
smart	:	(b)	a rude word used when one wants to be impolite
Radcliffe	:	(c)	someone who is rich enough to go to an expensive, private "prep school"
Harvard	:	(d)	a women's college near Harvard, but much smaller, with a library of only a few thousand books
prep school	:	(e)	the most famous private university in the United States, with a library of five million books
damn	:	(f)	an expensive private preparatory school where rich people's children are prepared for expensive universities like Harvard
go for coffee	:	(g)	go and have a cup of coffee and chat-something students often do when they are tired of studying or before arranging a date.

Example Three helps students to practise inferring meaning from context, while Example Five concentrates not on the meaning of a chunk of language, but rather on single words. In Example Six, students are first asked to guess what the people are *doing* with the words they say. Exercise 1 is quite easy, and gives the students an idea of what they are trying to do before they go on to a more difficult exercise. Exercise 2 emphasizes words and phrases in context. Finally, students must once again infer what the people are doing, but this time what they are doing is much more subtle.

Example Six

First read through the dialogue. Then, decide what Jenny and Oliver are *doing* in this conversation:

Oliver : I major in Social Studies.
Jenny : It doesn't show.
Oliver : It's an honours programme.
Jnnye : Listen, Preppie, I know you've got at least a few brains.
Oliver : Really?
Jenny : Yeah – you're hung up on me, aren't you?
Oliver : Listen, you conceited Radcliffe bitch, Friday night's the Dartmouth hockey game.
Jenny : So?

Oliver : So I'd like you to come.
Jenny : Why in the hell would I want to go to a lousy hockey game?
Oliver : Because I'm playing.

1. Find the places in the dialogue where (a) Oliver is introducing himself, and (b) Oliver is inviting Jenny. Mark them "a" and "b".
2. Now use the dialogue above to decide the meaning of the phrases below. Be careful! This time there are more meanings than phrases!

honours programme : undergraduate speciality
Peppie : not very smart . . . . or sociable
got . . . a few brains : rich kid
hung up on : well, maybe fairly intelligent
conceited . . . bitch : stupid, worthless
why in the hell : a special, difficult degree
lousy : in love with
major : snobbish, proud, in love with herself
: why (rude)

3. Now, one of the things that makes this film difficult to *understand* (even though it is easy to follow) is a "game" Oliver calls "verbal volleyball". This means that Oliver and Jenny are trying to insult each other and praise themselves in various ways. Read through the dialogue again and find the places where (c) Oliver praises himself, (d) Oliver insults Jenny, (e) Jenny praises herself, (f) Jenny insults Oliver. Mark them "c", "d", "e" and "f".

Another type of exercise that can be used to check understanding of inferences is filling in a chart. We are, in fact, emphasizing the same types of contextual guessing as in the past few exercises, but variety in exercise type is also important. Here is an example:

Example Seven

Try to fill in the chart according to the diaglogue.

"You call your father Phil?"
"That's his name. What do you call yours?"
"Old Stoneyface."
"You call him that to his face?"
"I never see his face."
"Why not?"
"Because it's covered with stone."
"Go on – he must take a great pride in you. You're a big Harvard hockey star, and you get As in exams."
"He was a big sportsman too, Jenny".
"Bigger than you?"
"Much bigger. He ran in the 1928 Olympics . . . and when I do succeed in something he isn't excited or surprised or anything like that. He expects it."
"But he's a busy man. Doesn't he have lots of banks and things?"

Name	Occupation	Religion	Past Achievements	Relation with Child
Oliver Barrett	________	Protestant	____________	
___Cavilleri	________	Catholic	None	Very good.

Depending on the level of the students and the number of times they can watch each scene, this exercise could be done without giving the dialogue in advance. Note that the occupation of Phil Cavilleri is not given in the exercise. The students should be able to recognise the information that is provided, but they should also be able to recognize what information is *not* given.

In the end, one probably wants to check comprehension. This can be done in a variety of ways. One way is to have the students number events in the order they occur in the film. The following exercise would be done following the viewing of the film "Coal Miner's Daughter". It should be read before viewing the film to aid comprehension.

Example Eight

SYNOPSIS (Number the following sentences in the order they occur in the film.)

Loretta has her first baby.
Patsy Cline is involved in a serious automobile accident.
Loretta and Doo separate.
Loretta gives birth to twins, and names one after Patsy.
The moonshiner is killed by the Greasy Creek moonshiners.
Patsy Cline is killed in a plane crash.
Loretta and Doo argue over where to put the bedroom in a new house.
Loretta wants Doo to ask her opinion more often; Doo suggests a divorce.
Doo starts working in a coal mine.
Doo gets a job as an auto mechanic.
Loretta appears on the Grand Old Opry radio show.
Loretta warns Doo to stay away from "trash like that woman."
A lonely woman calls Doo and Loretta at 1:00 a.m. and Doo shouts at her. Then, he tells her, "Yep. There's a lot of lonesome people in the world."

Another type of exercise to check general comprehension is filling in a chart. The students would have the chart before viewing the film. In this way they would know what to take notes on during the film. The following exercise was prepared for the film "Death on the Nile".

Example Nine

Guided Note-Taking:
You should fill in the following chart which will give you a summary of the film. If you do not remember a character, ask somebody else in the class to help you. You do not have to do this by yourself. Talk to other people. Exchange opinions.

PEOPLE WHO MIGHT HAVE WANTED TO KILL LYNETTE

Name of Character	**Description of Character**	**Motive**
1. Jacqueline de Belfort		Wants money and Simon
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

VICTIMS

Name of Victim	**Description of Victim**	**Weapon Used**
1.		
2.		
3.		

In this article, I have tried to show that many types of exercises are possible when using video. Traditionally, students watched the whole film and then answered comprehension questions, orally or written. I think that new exercises can be developed for video to teach communication strategies, especially interpreting. I have only just begun to experiment with new types of exercises, and I am sure that I have only touched the surface of a vast wealth of possibilities. Now I'd love to hear from other people who are trying to break away from tradition! The possibilities are endless!

PROBLEMS IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Lin Yuyin

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We use verbal and non-verbal symbols to convey messages to others. Effective communication occurs when the other person understands the message that we intend to get across. The meanings behind these verbal and non-verbal symbols carry the messages that we want the other person to receive. However, these meanings are heavily influenced by our cultural origins. When two people from very different cultures try to communicate, they use symbols with meanings pertaining to their own cultures. Even when the natural barrier of language is overcome, sometimes they can still fail to understand each other. Effective communication does not necessarily occur with an adequate knowledge of the contact language. This observation has made us realize that communicating with people from other cultures is both a difficult and exciting undertaking.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the causes of problems in intercultural communication by investigating the effects of cultural values, social norms and customs, nonverbal communication and the use of language of intercultural communication. Finally, some suggestions will be made on how to improve intercultural communication. The cultural differences that are discussed in this paper refer to those of the Chinese and the American cultures.

The Effect of Culture on Communication and Intercultural Communication.

Cultural Values

One important way in which cultures differ from one anther is in their basic value orientations. "Values, while internalized in the self and introduced through the family, mostly arise in society." (Condon and Yousef. 1981) Every individual has his/her perception of every phenomenon, which differs sightly from the perception of another individual in the same social group, because "each culture offers its people a number of options for satisfying any particular human need" (Seelye. 1976). Take American values for example. The values that Americans prize are a direct outgrowth of the unique American experience. From their beginning as a nation, Americans have placed high value on individualism, self-reliance, equality, achievement through active mastery of self-assertion, and a pronounced emphasis on one's rights and privileges. Accompanying these values are their negative concomitants: a fear of dependency, a grudging acceptance of authority, a resentment or dislike of rules and controls, and a tendency to mask or play down the superiority of others. This is quite different from Chinese values. Because of the fact that morality and ethics dominated ancient Chinese society, the Chinese pattern of mutual dependence, which is quite different from the American spirit of self-reliance has been very common until the present day. Many people in China obtain satisfaction from being under the protection of elders.

If an American is asked what kind of qualities are valued and respected, he/she would most probably answer "youth (vigour) and innovation". In the Chinese perspective, the equivalent qualities would be age (wisdom) and prominence. How different the two cultures are!

Understanding these differing views of qualities, both those of American and Chinese cultures, is critical to our effective intercultural communication. When we experience another culture, these views of valued qualities directly influence the way in which people convey a message and the meaning of the message they attempt to communicate to us. The value orientations of a group of people form the guidelines of why they communicate, to whom they communicate and for decoding the message transmitted to them by other people. For example, most people in the U.S. value informality and equality. Some people are impressed that children are allowed to speak out during meals and that often their wishes are deferred to. Others note that Americans consistently de-emphasize any superior status and insist that they call each other by their first names. Very often, they do not use titles which emphasize status distinction. For example, American children call their uncles and aunts but their first names, but Chinese children would usually call them Uncle or Auntie, which emphasizes their status. Chinese often interpret this American familiarity as superficial, and lacking respect, or more seriously, as insulting. Because of the difference in cultural values, individuals who are not aware of the problems in intercultural communication are unlikely to achieve effective communication, and sometimes these American cultural values can hinder communication, causing difficulties in conveying the intended message.

Social Norms and Customs

The common rituals that comprise the bulk of our interactions with people — greetings, farewells, courtesies, visits to other people's homes even the way we conduct a meeting are bound up in cultural rules which tell us how to interpret the symbols people are using. For example, in the U.S., there is a standard set of statements which comprise the greeting ritual. People know precisely what to say when they greet another person in a particular setting and they expect appropriate responses. Some of our Chinese students have often expressed to me their frustrations with greetings, which seem superficial and hypocritical. For example, American people will often smile at us foreigners and sometimes say "Hi" to us as we walk in the street even if they do not know us. In fact, their greeting is meant to pass on a feeling of amiability, sincerity and interest. There is another problem facing some of our Chinese students. They often have difficulty learning how to behave in a classroom in a U.S. educational institution. Again, this is because Americans have a set of expectations for appropriate behaviour in a classroom which is different from our culture. In a Chinese classroom, the professor expects his students to take careful notes, sit quietly and properly and listen to him attentively. He may expect questions from the students, but in the form of a request for repetition of what he said, and sometimes a question or two for clarification. Requests for clarification may be considered by some highly self-esteemed teachers as a mild challenge. In contrast, the behaviours expected of a student in an American classroom is a reflection of the attitudes and expectations seen in the light of American values. In the classroom the professor expects the students to take an active part rather than just sitting quietly and taking notes. As for the students, they respond accordingly. We can often see a student interrupting the teacher when the former feels it appropriate to express his personal opinion. A student may steal the turn of the teacher to answer a question posed by another student. It is not uncommon for a student to interrupt the teacher, asking questions tinctured with a challenge. From these examples we can clearly identify the different values, norms, attitudes, expectations and judgements that underlie classroom behaviour. The communication in the classroom does not limit itself to a verbal exchange. Indeed, American students convey their attitude toward the teacher and his lecture by other non-verbal means, e.g. posture, eye contact, etc.

Non-Verbal Symbols

Burgoon (1974) claims that "65% of the meaning in an interpersonal interaction is transmitted nonverbally." Although this figure may be somewhat exaggerated, the importance of nonverbal communication cannot be overlooked. Burgoon classifies the functions of nonverbal communication into six categories: 1. redundancy, 2. accentuation, 3. substitution, 4. regulation, 5. complement, 6. contradiction. Much of the meaning of American communication is conveyed through nonverbal means. This is also true for Chinese communication. There are some important dimensions of nonverbal communication that one should be aware of in an intercultural communication: (a) Proxemics – personal space between people, or the concept of territoriality. (b) Chronemics – use of time, e.g. being punctual for a formal meeting, but prominent figures are often late. (c) Kinesics – visual aspects of behaviour; e.g. punching one's own palm while speaking to emphasize one's expression of feelings; (d) Paralinguistics – vocal characteristics, e.g. use of tone of voice, intensity, etc. (e) Haptics – use of touch in communication; (f) Personal appearance – what to wear on different occasions. The scope of nonverbal communication touches nearly every aspect of life. Having a good knowledge of how meaning is transmitted nonverbally will no doubt facilitate communication with the people of the target culture.

What is important for various aspects of nonverbal communication, however, is to remember that the meaning of nonverbal symbols, just as the meaning of verbal symbols, varies from culture to culture. For example, the Chinese hand gesture for "come here" is similar to that for "go away" in the West. Or by making a circular movement with your index finger about ½ inch away and level with your temple means "You are crazy" for the Americans. But for the Chinese the same motion means "I am thinking".

A nonverbal symbol that has shared meaning in one culture (most of the people in the culture see the symbol and give a specific meaning to it) may have a different shared meaning in another culture. In fact, it might not have any shared meaning at all. What is a random nonverbal symbol (i.e. without particular meaning associated with it) in one culture, may have shared meaning in another.

Language

In addition to learning the basics of English, we must try to understand the unique ways in which English is used. Americans have a multiplicity of strange ways in which they modify the meaning of words to fit new situations. Indeed, they have a wide repertoire of slang and colloquial expressions which mystify us Chinese. When your American friends see you off at the airport, they may say to you "Break a leg". Probably, you will respond with a forced smile, trying hard to suppress your feelings, if you do not understand that they mean "Good luck". If you are watching TV, you may be a little puzzled when you hear, "Here's the story from Agnes", wondering why there is storytelling during the news hour. Slang expressions like "to beat the band" in "the police car was going down the freeway to beat the band", "monkey business in "I hear that there's a lot of monkey business going on in that company", and many others often cause problems in communication.

Another often neglected aspect of language function is the social interactional use of some linguistic items. Many Chinese students, even at the advanced level, do not recognise that they are often perceived by native English speakers as being abrupt and aggressive with their requests. This is because in Chinese "I would like to . . . " and "I want to . . . " are both realized by the same character, so, when making a request, they will say "I want to talk to you a minute" instead of "I would like to talk to you a minute", which would be better received.

Language is a tool of the people of a particular social group that employ it, and the way in which language is used reflects the culture of that social group. This relation between language and culture forms an important part in the learning of a second language because it involves the cultural values. In other words, people who speak different languages view the world differently. Therefore, in learning a second language or a foreign language, one must not try to carry over cultural views from the first language. Equally important, one must try to learn the cultural values, social norms, etc. that actually help to shape the language.

Some Suggestions as to how to Improve our Intercultural Communication

Distinguish between Description, Interpretation and Evaluation

In our interaction with Americans, it is important to differentiate between these three levels (description, interpretation and evaluation) of information processing. To objectively evaluate verbal and nonverbal messages is to clearly state the sensory information that you are receiving from the other person without colouring it subjectively. For example, on American university campuses, we might notice that American students will often smile (at us and others) and say "Hi" to us as we walk across the campus. Some Chinese students who observe this behaviour, instead of objectively evaluating it, talk about the superficial friendliness of American students. This is an interpretative statement which usually leads to a negative evaluation.

What is more important to remember is that for any behaviour which can be described in objective terms there exist multiple interpretations of the meaning of that behaviour. Evaluations of behaviour change, depending on the interpretations made. Given that the intercultural communication context casts the usefulness of our everyday interpretations into doubt, it is very important to stop ourselves from acting and reacting on the basis of interpretations that may not be accurate or that may not accurately interpret the intention of the other person. We should regard our interpretations as hypotheses that can be verified in subsequent interactions.

Remember that living in another culture requires adjustment

All of the studies on people living in a culture dramatically different from their own indicate that people experience emotional ups and downs as they try to understand that "strange people and customs" of the new culture they are living in. At times they will feel frustrated living in that country, with their fellow students and the faculty they work with. This is a necessary part of living in another culture which none of us can escape. Keep an open mind and try to understand that people are behaving according to their own cultural values which are born of a culture different from your own. What's more, avoid evaluating people's behaviour by the standards of your own country. Maintain your perspectives and very soon you will find yourself becoming adjusted to the new culture.

Learn to ask questions

For many of us this will be a very difficult task since our cultural values do not encourage us to speak out and ask questions of relative strangers. This is particularly true since sometimes our questions will indicate that the person we are talking to has not been clear in his/her communication with us. But in American culture, asking questions is a very acceptable communication technique and our ability to learn and understand will be greatly improved if we try to overcome our own inherent reluctance and ask when we do not understand. Asking questions in an academic setting is viewed as active participation, sharing experience or ideas, making a contribution, etc.

CONCLUSION

In many respects, the relationship between culture and communication is reciprocal. The chief problem associated with intercultural communication is error in social perception brought about by cultural differences that affect the perceptual process. For successful intercultural communication, it is important to be aware of the cultural variables affecting communication. It is also important to learn the cultural values, social norms and customs of the target culture. All of these help to bring about intercultural communication.

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ACQUISITON OF VOCABULARY IN THE COMMUNICATIVE CLASSROOM

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Chinese students, like most English second language learners, are often preoccupied with the acquisition of new vocabulary. This preoccupation frequently results in students compiling long lists of vocabulary items chosen at random and/or out of context. Students rarely have the opportunity to practise these vocabulary items and frequently the items are not useful to the students' area of speciality.

How can the ESL teacher who often teaches English to classes of students from mixed professional backgrounds help students to avoid these problems?

To satisfy the students' desire to acquire new vocabulary and the teacher's desire to have them use it in a communicative way, "Vocabulary Exchange" has been found to be both effective and popular with Chinese students. Students are allowed between 5–10 minutes per class for this activity.

Students are asked to prepare for each class three new vocabulary words chosen either from classroom reading materials or from journals and papers in their own area of speciality. Students are asked to:

1. have a special vocabulary book
2. write down the word – briefly citing the source
3. check the word in an English-English dictionary for phonetic transcription
4. provide a brief dictionary definition
5. provide a sample sentence either from the reading text or the dictionary.

Students can work either in pairs or in groups of three for the next stage of this activity. In mixed professional background classes students can be paired according to their area of interest, or if the teacher feels that the students' vocabulary is becoming too field-restrictive, they can be placed in groups with students of other professional backgrounds.

Working in pairs or in groups of three:

1. Student A tells Student B (and C) the word, pronouncing it carefully. Student B (and C) may not look at the word but can only listen.
2. Student B writes down the word.
3. Student A then presents (again orally) the definition and the model sentence.
4. Student B can ask any questions to clarify understnading or spelling but may not look at the other student's paper.
5. Then another student takes a turn.
6. While students are exchanging vocabulary, the teacher moves around the room checking pronunciation and understanding.

Crucial to the success of this activity is the insistence that students use English-English dictionaries only and that they provide a model sentence from context. No translated words are allowed.

Through this method of practising vocabulary, students can not only enlarge their vocabulary but can gain words that they need for their own area of speciality. In addition, students practise speaking, reading, listening, writing and repeating these words in grammatically correct sentences. Each student gets an opportunity to speak individually with the teacher to clarify problems of understanding and have his/her pronunciation corrected on a one to one basis.

DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTION BETWEEN CHINESE STUDENTS AND AMERICAN TEACHERS IN AN INTENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMME

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The intensive English Language Centre (ELC) jointly administered by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), theoretically based on the latest innovative approaches to language teaching and learning, offers Chinese graduate students nine months of English language training using the adjunct model and the communicative approach. According to this model, students are enrolled in Academic English Skills (AES) courses specified for improvement of language skills necessary for survival in a concurrently given content course resembling as much as possible, a college level course given at UCLA. Two courses were offered in the academic year of 1986-87: The Sociology of the Social Role in the fall semester and The United States and World Politics in the spring semester.

Students enrolled in this programme are selected by entrance examination but actually reflect a wide range of actual English ability. Each class section is made up of mixed levels. Approximately 80 students begin the academic year with 10% attrition by the end of the year.

Although in the past a content course has been taught in both the fall and spring semesters, in the present academic year (1987-88), we are providing a content course only in the spring semester as we feel we can use the initial part of the year preparing students for such an academic environment and thus perhaps alleviate some of the perceptual problems which are the focus of this paper.

Eight hours of basic skills in AES – two hours each of listening, reading, speaking and writing – are offered. When the adjunct course begins, we turn the focus of the skills exercises in AES toward language use in the content course itself. For example, the time spent on reading will involve content reading and the time spent in writing will be spent on how to write exams and papers.

In the afternoons, we offer less academically-oriented courses called Mini-courses. These courses involve aspects of language which include informal communications, news, culture and film.

Generally, student response toward this curriculum has been favourable and student improvement in all four language skills is obvious. However, significant attitudinal differences toward learning have emerged between the American teacher and the Chinese student. The most significant of these are: (a) the discrepancy between what is perceived as being learned versus what is perceived as being taught and (b) the disagreement as to how much responsibility is to be borne by the student for his/her own progress. These incongruencies appear to be based on differences in theoretical and cultural attitudes toward learning and manifest themselves in the Chinese students feeling overworked and unguided and the American teacher feeling compromised and frustrated. It is suspected that a deeper problem exists. The way Chinese students perceive learning fundamentally conflicts with the expectations of American teachers as to how students should learn.

In the case of our programme, an innovative system has been transplanted into a foreign environment and has been expected to work. Most teachers in the West are convinced by the vast amount of literature which says that innovative teaching, that is activity-oriented learning, is more effective than traditional or passive learning. But no one has yet proven what is bad about the traditional method or more importantly, what is *good* about it. Rather, we have just expected that our students in China would openly and gladly grasp our methods and, of course, learn.

North American teachers utilize task-oriented activities – learning by doing – but as language teachers they are still focused on the means, the language. Activities are geared toward lowering the affective filter, encouraging students to communicate freely by concentrating on the task at hand. Indeed, the Chinese student does concentrate on the task, but too much dedication toward the goal can backfire. Students feel drawn toward completing the task well and are thus frustrated at their inability to do so in English.

For example, the political science professor last Spring required students to write a detailed analysis of the Cold War. The problem began because the American professor expected a level roughly equivalent to that which he demands at UCLA. However, the task required clearly highlighted the insufficiency of the language level of the students. Rather than providing students with an environment for making their best efforts to convey their ideas in English, the task gave many students the idea that their knowledge was being judged by their ability to express themselves in English, and thus concentration on the goal did not inspire "real" use of the language but, in fact, gave way to a feeling of inadequacy.

Another example from the AES class presented itself in an exercise which required students, working in pairs, to identify differences in a set of two pictures by using expressions of spatial order and location. Each student described a picture which varied slightly from that of his partner. The students became so highly involved with this activity that they were eager to find *all* of the differences and in doing so, many of the students found that English was *not* an effective medium of communication. They began resisting our main goal of using English and relied on an occasional word of Chinese. As teachers, of course, we persevered in our demand that English be used. But in the past, it appears that this kind of frustration, combined with perhaps an inadequate sense of purpose, has yielded complaints that such activities are artificial, and neither academic nor mature.

The second observation of an attitudinal difference is the disagreement as to how much responsibility is to be borne by the students for their own learning. Discussions with students indicate that most believe that not enough listening practice is offered. Indeed, the curriculum only offers two hours of a class labelled "listening"; yet, the fact that "listening" is required in all interactions at the Centre appears to be lost.

Students frequently ask teachers to make them speak English in the evenings. This activity is worth encouraging as a voluntary activity to be done by students on their own, but it is futile as a required assignment as it is impossible to monitor. As one honest student said with a chuckle, "If you don't make us, we probably won't (do it)". Students also complain that they find it difficult to understand each other's English.

The following student journal entry further illustrates the attitudinal differences regarding students' responsibilities for their own learning. The students were asked to develop a group skit as a speaking activity. The goal of this activity was to provide an opportunity for students to develop a project together in English. Most of the preparation time was outside class therefore the decision to use English exclusively was left up to the students.

> "The problem lay in that we had to spend much time to work out the content of the programme, instead of practising speaking in English. We discussed a programme in Chinese, and would write out it and perform it in English, then, somebody who would not participate in the writing would only recite it in English. How much will be the benefits of the activity?"

It can be seen that the students' questioning of the value of this activity stems from the fact that they used Chinese in the preparation stages of the skit. Probably this was done to maximise efficiency.

To identify what the differences are in the perception of learning between Chinese students and American teachers and the differences in where responsibilities lie, students themselves were "tapped" for their inner philosophies toward learning.

At the end of the 1986-87 programme, eighteen students were interviewed and asked the broad general questions, "How did you feel about the programme?; About AES?; About the adjunct course?" It was hoped that these questions would begin a flow of conversation from which some conclusion might be drawn. Indeed, a great deal of thoughts came forward, but none that shed any light on my specific questions. The interview ended in a forum in which students once again were able to identify problems and dissatisfaction such as those described thus far.

This year, therefore, more specific questions were posed to students in written form. After certain lessons, I asked, "What do you think was my purpose in teaching this lesson?" and "What did you learn?" It seems the questions were too transparent; the students essentially did not differentiate between the two and they answered what they thought I wanted to hear – that indeed they had learned something of value. Regardless of reality, they could not, out of respect or sheer inability to discern the situation themselves, tell me they learned little or nothing.

Thus, their words matched my words which said we perceived our interaction as having the same purposes, but everyday realities such as the questions and complaints posed by students still indicate that this is not entirely so.

There does exist a difference in the perception between the Chinese students and American teachers as to what is being learned versus what is being taught and with whom the greater part of this responsibility lies. The problem, in part, may be that American teachers are too comfortable with the notion that the communication approach is the correct way and face the class with the assumption that essentially, students think so too. Thus, teachers fail to define intentions precisely enough when introducing an activity-oriented lesson. Students have years of traditional learning background and are bound to resist any playful approach especially at the graduate level.

These resulting differences, however, do not block language learning. Indeed, I believe they only lessen the speed with which language learning proceeds and thus these differences induce a waste of energy in the feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration on the part of both parties.

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A UNIT DESIGN IN A READING COURSE – TEACHING GLOBAL READING TO CHINESE STUDENTS

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In a traditional Chinese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) course, whether extensive or intensive, students are usually narrowly directed toward doing close reading, thus paying much attention to the linguistic form, vocabulary, etc. rather than global reading, i.e. reading for the main idea. Very often students, find their reading speed is not fast enough to accomplish the reading task. Sometimes even the level of comprehension does not seem satisfactory when compared to the total time spent in reading. In other words, reading efficiency is quite low. This problem is largely due to the habit of "close reading" which the students have developed in their training. In order to help students overcome this problem, I have gone against the traditional Chinese approach on the teaching of reading, by setting up the teaching unit described in this article. The objective of this unit is:

1. The students will understand the concept of global reading and will be able to use this strategy in theory later reading tasks after completing the unit.
2. Students will learn some vocabulary from the reading done in the classroom.

The unit consists of three parts: Teaching Global Reading, Teaching Vocabulary and General Review.

Teaching Global Reading

Before teaching reading, I divide the selected text (refer to the appendix) into several parts and print these on different worksheets. Copies of the complete text should also be prepared. My sample text is "Family Networks and The Elderly". Therefore, the text is divided into four parts: paragraph one, paragraphs two and three, paragraph four and paragraphs five and six.

Step 1. Write the title of the text on the blackboard. Ask the students to predict the content of the text. Students may write down their predictions on a sheet of paper. The following questions may be used:

1. What do you think the writer is going to write on this title?
2. What is your idea about "networks"?
3. What does the writer mean by "family networks"?
4. What do you think about the elderly in the family?
5. How are the elderly related to the content?

Step 2. Write the first sentence of paragraph one on the blackboard. Ask the students to predict the content of the paragraph and repredict the content of the text by writing down their points.

Step 3. Hand the students the first worksheet which contains paragraph one. Ask the students to read and not to worry about the words they do not know. Tell them not to use dictionaries now. Students will check their predictions after they finish reading. The teacher will then introduce the concept of "topic", "topic sentence" and "message": the topic is the thing you want to talk about; the message is what you want to say about the topic; the topic sentence is the main message about the topic. Then ask the students to find the topic, topic sentence and message in the first paragraph and underline the topic sentence and/or key words. (Students may write down the main idea of the paragraph). After that they are asked to predict the context of the next paragraph or the following text by writing down their views.

Step 4. Hand students the worksheet containing paragraphs two and three and let them read the two paragraphs. After reading and checking the previous predictions, the following questions will be asked.

1. What is the main idea of the paragraph?
2. What is the topic, topic sentence and message?
3. How are the topic sentence and message arranged in the paragraph? Or where does the writer put the topic sentence?
4. What are the key words? Underline them.
5. How is the main idea related to the previous paragraph and title?
6. What does the author of the text believe?
7. What are his assumptions supporting this belief?

Later, ask the students to predict the next paragraph or the following text by writing down their views.

Step 5. Write the first sentence of paragraph 4 on the blackboard and ask the students to repredict the following text. Hand the students the worksheets containing pragraph four and ask them to check their predictions after reading it. Then ask the students:

1. What do you think the writer will write next? (He will be against the belief.)
2. Why do you think so? (From textual clues).
3. What are some of the clues you use or find? (Linguistic markers).

If the students' answers are not the same as the teacher expected, the teacher should explain what is meant by linguistic clues. Linguistic markers are often used to signal that the writer will reject the viewpoint presented. Examples of these are, "it is commonly thought", "it is assumed", "at first glance" (in paragraph four), "On the contrary", etc.

If the students' answers are the same as the teacher expected, the linguistic markers can be pointed out by students. The teacher should then elaborate the point by giving more examples, which may come from the text itself or from other materials – usually short pieces.

Step 6. After the instruction/discussion on the linguistic markers that signal the writer's rejection of the viewpoint, the teacher will hand the students the worksheets containing paragraphs five and six. Students will check their predictions after reading. The following questions will then be answered by students:

1. What is the main idea of this section?
2. What are the topics/messages in each paragraph?
3. How are they organized or arranged?
4. How is the main idea related to the previous reading and the title?
5. Underline the key words. What are they?
6. How did the author prove the belief wrong?
7. What are the proofs against the belief?

8. Point out the linguistic markers for the order or number of the proof. ("First, Second, etc.")
9. What is the author's conclusion?
10. What are the linguistic markers signalling the conclusion? ("To sum up", "In short", "In conclusion", "To conclude", "In sum".)

Some supplementary materials can be used for practising these linguistic markers.

The teacher will then remind the students of the organizational pattern in paragraphs three and four and ask them to compare this with the pattern in paragraphs five and six and help them come up with some conclusions. Meanwhile, the teacher should point out that there are some other organizational patterns. Examples should be given to the students.

Step 7. For this step, the teacher should help students recall what they did before reading – predict, check the prediction and elicit background knowledge; what they did during reading – find the topic and message, find key words, summarize the main idea and relate it to the title and previous reading; use textual clues, context, linguistic markers and discourse patterns. As students respond, the teacher lists all the answers on the blackboard. He or she may also ask the students which part of the above they found the most difficult, so that the teacher may devise some similar exercises. Finally, the teacher points out that the items listed on the blackboard are called reading strategies.

Step 8. The teacher introduces the concept of global reading: reading for the main idea and reading only key words. The whole complete text should then be handed to students, who will be asked to perform the following tasks:

1. Reread the paragraph
2. Underline the main points
3. Choose which part of the text or paragraph can be ignored without loss of the main idea.
4. Identify the important aids to ignoring appropriately (review the strategies).

At the end, the teacher gives the students some other reading materials for homework assignments.

Teaching Vocabulary

Teaching vocabulary is not the main focus of this unit. However, students will get to know how to guess the meaning of the words in the text and master certain vocabulary under the notion of family, which is the topic of the text.

1. The teacher asks the students to find all the words they do not know and gives some suggestions for choosing the important vocabulary.
2. The teacher will teach the vocabulary about family by giving certain strategies for guessing the meanings of words. These strategies for guessing are:
   (a) clues of form, e.g. "household".
   (b) context clues, e.g. "sibling".
   (c) words with opposite meaning, e.g. "extended family" vs "nuclear family".
   (d) cause-effect relationship; e.g. "alienated".
   (e) overall comprehension, e.g. "nuclear families", "maltreated".

The vocabulary is categorized in the notion of FAMILY so that students can master it in a semantic way. Finally, the teacher asks the student to use the new words in an oral presentation or in a written summary of the article.

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Reviewing and Practising

At the end of the unit, the teacher helps the students to review all the strategies learned in Section 2 and may add one more strategy for global reading, that of guessing the meaning of the words in the text. Students will be given more opportunities for practising reading strategies. The following guidelines can be given to the students:

1. Underline the sentence which expresses the writer's opinion.
2. Which part of the text/paragraph could be ignored if you were looking for information on the topics?
3. What do you expect each section to be about by reading the title/topic/ subtitle?
4. Underline the main points in the reading material.
5. Underline the writer's conclusion/suggestion in the light of his main point.

The teacher can also suggest that students check the time they take to read to see if they can improve their reading rate after learning to use reading strategies. This assumes that selected materials are of a similar length and level of difficulty as the sample text.

The whole unit covers four fifty minute periods. The first part, "Teaching Reading", takes one period. The second part takes half a period, and the review part takes two and a half periods. The last two periods are for classroom directed practice in which the teacher helps the students to become familiar with reading strategies by providing specific guidelines and general comprehension questions which can be regarded as tests. However, the time schedule for the unit is negotiable as it largely depends on the students' understanding and reading ability.

APPENDIX: The Selected Sample Test

FAMILY NETWORKS AND THE ELDERLY

1. Recently statistics show that family life in the US is changing rapidly. Since the beginning of the twentieth century there has been a decline in the percentage of households and a dramatic increase in the percentage of one-person households. America has become known as a "country on the move". In fact, ten per cent of the American population moves each year. However, it has been noted that one in every three marriages ends in divorce and that as a result, one in every three children born in the 1980s will spend some part of their childhood in single parent households.
2. These changes have led to the belief that there has been a breakdown in family life. It is assumed that since Americans move a great deal, the elderly live at a great distance from their children. Moreover, not only are they far apart but more seriously, they are alienated from their children. As a result, it is concluded that the majority of the elderly do not see their children on a regular basis.
3. Two other assumptions that are called upon to support the belief that family life in American is in trouble have to do with relationships among siblings and health. It is assumed that because more Americans live in nuclear families, the majority of old people rarely see their siblings or other relatives. Finally, it is said that families no longer need to take care of their elderly parents because there are many offices and programmes for helping the poor in the United States.
4. At first glance these assumptions appear logical. Almost everyone has friends who have moved at least once or as many as three times. It may also be the case that

one's parents, in fact, live at quite some distance away. It is also true that most of us will have a friend who has been paying for his mother to stay in an old people's home.

5. However, in an article in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* (1973), Ethel Shanas reports on a survey of families in the United States and Europe that calls into question the validity of these assumptions. Here only those statistics referring to the United States will be mentioned. First of all it was found that at least 61% of the elderly live either with their children or only ten minutes away by car. Over 50% of those surveyed reported that they had visited their children within the last 24 hours, and 78% of the women and 34% of the men stated that they had visited a sibling within the last week.

6. Finally, the notion that government offices and programmes have taken over caring for old people also appears to be an invalid assumption. When Medicare, a programme to help the elderly with their medical bills, was passed into law in 1966, it was expected that families would no longer take care of their elderly. However, this did not prove to be true. Before the law was passed, 4% of the elderly were in institutions and since the passing of the law there has been an increase of only 1% – an insignificant change. In fact, it is when the elderly are not in good health that they live with their children. As long as they are well they live on their own. In sum, it cannot be so hastily concluded that the elderly are maltrated. On the contrary, the evidence demonstrates that they are not being neglected and that close family relationships in the United States will continue.

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PARENTS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO SELECT THEIR CHILD'S SEX – A TOPIC FOR DEBATE

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If you've been teaching in China for more than a few weeks you've probably already used China's "One Child Policy" as a topic for debate or discussion or as a subject for written compositions. Recently, I've discovered a way of extending this topic that will have your students arguing in the halls – hopefully in English – long after class has ended.

According to *Asiaweek's* October 16, 1987 issue, Japanese medical researchers have developed a method that allows potential parents to select the sex of their child. The technique, which has an 80 to 85% success rate, involves artificial insemination with sperm samples that have had male and female chromosomes separated. The article, found in the *Viewpoint* section of the magazine, presents the opposing views of two Japanese doctors, one a proponent and the other a critic of the technique.

The use of such a method would have serious implications, particularly in Asian countries with a traditional preference for male offspring. Since the "One Child Policy" would obviously intensify these implications in China, I decided to find out whether or not my students would be in favour of its use. After briefly describing the technique in class, I asked students to debate the following proposition: "Parents should be allowed to select their child's sex." The class was divided into three groups: the affirmative side, the negative side and judges. In order to help prepare their arguments, the affirmative and negative side were given photocopies of the views of the doctor that supported their side. Judges were given copies of both the critic's and the proponent's views in order to help them better judge the debate. Use of these doctors' views is by no means essential. For those who are interested, the following is a summary of both doctors' arguments:

Against sex selection:

- will lead to sexual prejudice and sexual imbalance in populations that favour male children
- doesn't eliminate transmission of hereditary diseases (as proponents claim)
- method is not completely foolproof
- too early to determine if there are any abnormalities or side effects in children conceived using technique

For sex selection:

- eliminates cases where women continue having children until they have a son
- eliminates female infanticide
- eliminates hereditary diseases
- any sexual imbalance in population would eventually be corrected. (If number of females diminished greatly they would become more desirable resulting in more

female births until ratio was restored.)

- no problems or abnormalities have been detected up to present.

The debate proved to be highly successful both in my classes and those of my colleagues at the Canada China Language Centre. A written composition in which the students present their own views after the debate could provide a natural follow up.

COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN READING

Han Hongju

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Unlike traditional English classes in China, there are many language-learning activities carried out in class at the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC). These activit make a class lively, interesting and enjoyable. Students benefit from these by learning to study independently and by making good use of the materials available. One example of such an activity is a homework assignment which involves students in both out of class and in class preparations.

In China, there are usually 35 students in English classes for non-English majors. These students are required to study English for two years at universities or colleges. After two years of study, they should read English fairly well; understand some spoken English and speak and write a little. It is not an easy job for teachers to conduct many activities in an English class, for the classes are big and the grammar translation method is still in effect. At the CCLC, the communicative approach has been adopted and class sizes are small. Different activities are blooming in classes. For example, in a reading class, not only are the different skills practised and a variety of materials used, but various activities are involved.

Themes are also popular at the CCLC. All the classes work on the same theme during a certain period of time so as to reinforce vocabulary and have students learn more about one subject. One of the themes this semester was "Health and Medicine" which included the sub-theme "Recreation and Entertainment". From this, I choose the topic "music". Students were asked to give a two or three minute presentation in class about something connected with music. They could talk about a talented musician, a famous singer, a composer and so on. They were also informed that the best presentations would be awarded prizes by the teacher. In the first period, I presented the students with the materials that I had prepared. These were "Local Night Out" as a scanning exercise and a "record sleeve" introducing a famous American soul singer named Aretha Franklin for skimming; both articles are from *Authentic English for Reading.* I also played a tape of Aretha's songs fo the class.

In the following class, the students first worked in three groups. Each talked about the musician or singer he or she liked most and the groups chose the best presentation within each group. The "winner" of each group gave his/her presentation to the whole class. They were delighted when they won the prizes, which were music books containing all the songs from the film "My Fair Lady" plus four cloze exercises to help students practise.

The lesson turned out to be very successful. Everybody listened attentively to his or her classmates as they were attracted by the various topics. One of the students talked about the history of tango – how it originated, developed and how it became popular. Another talked about the 1987 top country music song in the States: "Daddy's Hands". Both of them brought tapes to class and played them after the presentation. The students were really impressed by the music. Still others told the class about Chinese traditional musical instruments, Canadian music, the famous Russian composer Tchaikovsky, the oldest, largest, smallest, theatres in the world and so on. Everybody contributed to the class and learned a lot, as did the teacher.

From this particular activity,the students learned firstly to use the resources available to them for they acquired the information from books, encyclopedias, magazines and newspapers. Secondly, the students practised not only reading skills in a reading class, but listening and speaking skills. Finally, they learned to use audio-visual aids to assist them in expressing their ideas successfully.

In order for this activity to be successful, the teacher must make the students take the assignment seriously so that everybody participates in the class. The teacher should also pace the class activities well and let one follow another so that the students do not get bored. Then a wonderful class can be conducted.

With the economic reform going on in China, there must also be an educational reform in teaching. Soon different activities will be thriving in traditional English classes in China.

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MONITORING TEACHER EVALUATIONS OF LESSON PLANS

Charlene Polio

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The English Language Centre (ELC) at the Graduate Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences began instruction in the fall of 1985. It is a joint project with the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) which administers a grant for the centre. The programme is jointly administered by an American and a Chinese director, and jointly taught by five American and three Chinese teachers. The set-up of the programme is quite complex and consists of two types of teams: curriculum and teaching. Each curriculum team and each teaching team consists of two teachers. Each teacher in the Centre is on both a curriculum and a teaching team. The eight teachers are responsible for teaching four sections of Academic English Skills (AES) (eight hours a week) and are responsible for developing the curriculum for the four skill areas (listening, speaking, reading, writing). Three of the sections are co-taught by American and Chinese teachers and one section by two Americans. The curricula of three of the skill areas are developed jointly by American and Chinese teachers; the curriculum for the remaining skill area is developed by two Americans. The curriculum teams write weekly lesson plans for their particular skill area. Each week lesson plans are exchanged and all four teaching teams use the same lesson plans to teach their section of AES.

Clearly, difficulties will arise when two groups of teachers who differ in language ability and cultural knowledge teach and develop curriculum together. Even within a homogeneous group of English teachers there will be different opinions as to the best approaches to language teaching. The structure of AES at the centre presents a unique problem, at least one that none of the teachers here have ever before experienced. Teaching from another person's lesson plan can pose problems because of differences in teaching styles, pace in the classroom, and ideas about which techniques work best.

One step toward rectifying these problems has been the institution of a system of weekly reports. At the end of the week, each teacher fills out a form listing the lesson plans which she/he has taught. There are three types of comments requested on the form: deviations from lesson plan, particularly good aspects of the lesson plan, and problems or suggestions. Each week the research coordinator collects the forms and types up the comments by skill area. These summary reports are then distributed to all the teachers to read.

This method of commenting has several benefits. First, the ELC is in its third year. At the end of each year, the curriculum team leaves behind a notebook with lesson plans for the following year's teachers. In the past, informal comments from teachers who had taught the previous year were the only source of comments. This year, each lesson plan is coded to match comments on the weekly reports so that next year's teachers get feedback. There is also immediate feedback provided for each curriculum team, giving its members a chance to change and modify their lesson plans throughout the year.

The weekly reports may also help teacher morale. The reports are an organized forum for teachers to present their opinions and suggestions and therefore can hopefully prevent frustrations from building to a point where they are unmanageable. There is also positive reinforcement from colleagues, as many comments praise the techniques or materials used, and this make the teachers realize that others appreciate the work they have done.

The ELC is intended to be a laboratory for research for UCLA students doing Master's or Ph.D. degrees. One such student is examining students' progress in writing while another wrote an evaluation of the programme for a Master's thesis. Thus, it is important to document what goes on in the classroom. The amount of detail in the lesson plans differs across the curriculum teams and teachers do make changes for technical reasons or because of their preferences. Thus, with the lesson plans and reports, one can go back through the previous years and find out what was done on a daily basis.

Because of the mix of cultures, there are yet two more benefits. One is that the American teachers learn more about the needs of the Chinese teachers in the classroom. Although their English is excellent, they are not native speakers and thus will always face certain difficulties in the classroom that native speakers do not. Secondly, the American teachers, especially those new to China, are not as knowledgeable about the Chinese students, and can learn more about them from the the Chinese teachers' comments.

The comments obtained from the reports during this past year can be classified into several different types. Below are examples of each category to give an idea of the type of information obtainable through the reports.

1. Technical Problems

To any outsider teaching in China, there are technical problems to consider which may be uncommon in one's native country. When the nature of these problems becomes clear, they can be considered for future lesson plans. These comments also explain why a particular activity may not have been completed.

Examples:

(a) Room was too light for OHP (overhead projector).
(b) Couldn't find tape or machine. Technicians' room was locked.
(c) No electricity so did not get to do FMTSF (Follow me to San Francisco).

2. Lack of meeting objectives

The teachers gave their opinions as to whether the objective for a particular lesson plan was met or whether the activity and/or materials were appropriate to meeting that objective.

Example:

If we were emphasizing skimming, scanning and fast reading, why were we starting off with such incredibly detailed reading?

3. Student Opinions

Often the teachers comment about how their section felt about the lesson plan's activity or materials. They either observe the students' reactions to the lesson or receive comments from them. Thus, the teachers have access to the reaction of students other than their own.

Examples:

(a) Wonderful! The students were excited and totally involved in this activity. Even the lower students tried very hard. They had a lot of fun.
(b) Students loved the skits. They would like to do more of this kind.

4. **Addition of activities**

Often the teachers add activities because there is class time left at the end of the activity, or they feel there is some activity which would help meet the objective of the lesson plan.

Examples:

(a) Lesson finished in one hour so added paragraph by paragraph reading aloud – calling the students on all details. Seemed effective. Added role-playing the story. Fun.

(b) Students still had trouble telling directions even when we gave them some vocabulary on the board. Then we let students ask teachers directions and vice versa. It did help.

5. **Removal of activities**

A particular part of a lesson plan may not be done because there is no time left for it or because the teacher for some reason thinks it is inappropriate.

Example:

Made a mistake and used *Skillful Reading* instead of *Reader's Choice* for part 3.

6. **Chinese teacher concerns**

The weekly reports provide a place for the Chinese teachers to comment on aspects of a lesson that American teachers may not consider if writing the lesson plan for a native speaker.

Example:

It would be much easier for the Chinese teachers if we had an answer key to cloze passage for the listening video.

7. **Materials**

The teachers often comment on negative and positive aspects of the material used in a particular lesson.

Examples:

(a) I don't agree with the grammar review packet analysis of the present perfect.

(b) There were problems culturally with the reading material in *Skillful Reading.*

8. **Quizzes**

A teacher may comment on how appropriate a quiz or assignment was as a means of evaluating what has been taught. This allows the curriculum team to modify further means of evaluation or eliminate a score as part of a student's grade.

Example:

I felt the listening quiz was not directly derived from what we had covered in class. The unmentioned dates required calculation which we've never done.

9. **Cultural problems for students**

The Chinese teachers may have more insight into the cultural problems of the Chinese students regarding certain materials or techniques.

Example:

I'm afraid the category of "Employment Experience" on the employment application was not good for the students because most of them did not have employment experience. Besides, in China we never ask questions about the date of last employment or name and address of employer, so almost all the students were confused with these questions.

10. Procedure modification

Often a teacher may rearrange part of the lesson to facilitate meeting the objectives. The curriculum team can consider these as suggestions for future lesson plans.

Example:

Discussed vocabulary earlier in the lesson plan. This makes more sense.

11. General positive comments

Examples:

(a) Writing assignment topic was really nice.
(b) Nicely-organized and useful for students.

After a few weeks of writing weekly reports, the teachers began to add comments about the ELC other than those pertaining to their weekly lesson plans. This prompted a miscellaneous category to be added to the summary report. One curriculum team even wrote a memo in response to comments others had made on their lesson plans. Thus, the teachers see the reports as a forum for their opinions, problems and suggestions.

MOTIVATION – AN ISSUE OF FIRST CONCERN IN INTENSIFIED ENGLISH STUDY

Zhou Guangfu

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Motivation is probably the most often used catch all term for explaining the success or failure of virtually any complex task. It is easy to believe that success in a task is due simply to the fact that someone is "motivated". For instance, over the past few years, China has achieved great success in the countryside. This is mainly because the peasant masses have been motivated through the implementation of the contract system. On the other hand, some enterprises which are not profitable now seem to have their problems attributed to motivation. The same can be said about learning a foreign language. A learner will similarly be successful with proper motivation and this is especially true of the intensified study of a foreign language.

We have seen many times that foreign language teachers spend a lot of time preparing individually or collectively for the texts to be taught – including probing key words and phrases, tackling grammatical problems, etc. But one thing is usually ignored, that is, how to motivate the students. As students are not puppets responding to the strings we pull, this brings up the basic question of motivation. In successful foreign language teaching, of course, the teacher must be competent enough to have mastery of the language concerned, but what is more important, it seems to me, is how to motivate the students to learn with interest and enthusiasm. Any student attending an intensified English study class has a specific goal in mind but this does not mean that he/she is fully motivated. There can be a number of misconceptions and worries such as:

1. "I am too 'old' to learn a foreign language well enough to express myself, since I am an adult".
2. "My pronunciation is too poor for others to understand".
3. "I am afraid that there will be too many mistakes in my oral English".
4. "I would rather keep my mouth shut as much as possible than lose face."

We cannot say that all these worries are nonsense. Obviously, these only increase the obligation of the teacher to help the students to do away with such passive psychological factors and stimulate the positive intrinsic drive to achieve the goal of learning.

In psychology, motive means the subjective factors stimulating action by the individual in the form of desire, interest, ideal, etc. All human activities are caused by a certain motive. Without a strong desire or need, there cannot be any motive for carrying out any activity and there cannot be, of course, any behaviour either.

Motive grows out of need and dominates human behaviour. When there is a need, an anxiety and tension will be developed psychologically and this becomes the driving force leading to the formation of the motive. Since there is a motive, a target or orientation action has to be selected or sought out. Once the target is found, the activity to satisfy the need has to be conducted. When the action is completed, the motive is weakened. In the course of time, the need is gradually satisfied. Then a new motive

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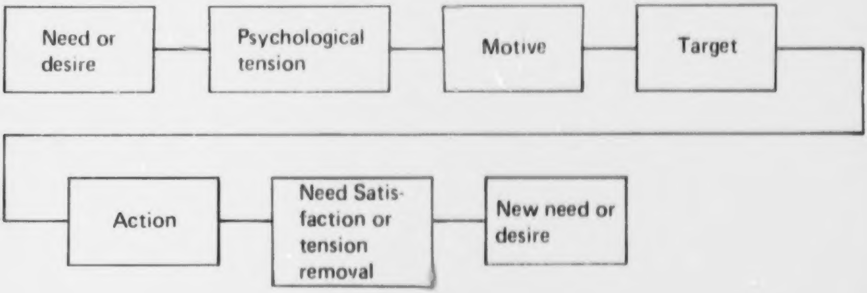
emerges and the process is repeated. This process can be shown in the following block diagram:



In a broad sense, motivation means bringing into full play human initiative and creativeness, and in a narrow sense it is thought of as an internal drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves one to a particular action. In an intensified English study class, a majority of students pursue English studies as a requirement or as a basic tool for later purposes such as professional reading, communication or passing some test such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Graduate Records Exam (GRE) or English Proficiency Test (EPT). They are willing to trust the teacher's judgment as to the best way to achieve these goals effectively. So it becomes imperative for the teacher to understand the role of motivation in determining the student's reaction to methods and materials. The teacher is required to know how he can best utilize the student's personal motivation, once it has been identified, and how it can be redirected if necessary.

From my personal experience, the following methods are conducive to motivating the students in the intensified study of English, especially in classes for improving listening comprehension or oral expression.

1. From easy to difficult material

Whatever the material, textbooks, recording tapes, video tapes, or slides may be, the contents should be arranged step by step in terms of the degree of difficulty. Edited, slightly-edited and authentic materials should be provided gradually as the student's language level increases. Vocabulary, speed, sentence complexity and other variables should be controlled. The requirements of some tests can be compared to a roof. What is most needed is the ladder to get to the roof. In the same way, Chinese learners of English require exercises and materials which will take them to the roof. It is hard to jump from the ground straight onto the roof. Materials which are too difficult and complicated will only frustrate the students instead of motivating them.

2. Interest

It seems clear, and it has long been recognised by a wide audience, that the most vital problem in any classroom is how to stimulate and retain the interest of the students. The art of teaching is only the art of interesting, of arousing curiosity and curiosity is active only in happy minds. Teaching approaches and methods must be inherently interesting, if good results are to be expected. One should not depend on the personality of the teacher or on a variety of techniques to arouse curiosity and motivation; a good teacher should challenge the students. He/she should force them to use the foreign language for genuine communication all the time in the classroom, carefully grading the difficulties so that the students can accomplish the task set before them. The teacher must be strict with the students, asking them to be active participants in various activities instead of being onlookers.

3. Meaningful practice

The teacher should insist on meaningful practice rather than boring drill, and the teacher as well as the student should be engaged in meaningful activity. Dramatization sometimes provides good results. For example, as I observed once, when the class was going on, a stranger rushed into the classroom, snatched the teacher's handbag and ran away as if a robbery was in progress. This got the students enormously shocked. After that, questions were asked about the sex, age, colour, clothing and appearance of the "robber", as if it were an interview between police and witnesses at the police station. Students appear to learn a lot in such practice. Sometimes, the students can be asked to make comments or answer multiple choice questions based on authentic materials, such as news developments from newspapers or broadcasts.

4. Student-centred class

Unlike ordinary classes of science and engineering, a foreign language class should emphasize practice by the students themselves in developing the skills of communication. The chief purpose of the class is not too convey language knowledge or grammatical rules but to develop the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. These skills can only be fostered through practice. During the class, the teacher should act as a conductor for a performance to make the students replete with opportunities to be exposed to the language environment. Around 70% of the class time is to be spent on activities by the students. Interviews, oral reports, story-telling, comment-making, discussion, debate, exchange of views, competition, informal talks and other activities are some of the choices for student involvement.

5. Diversified techniques

If the teacher insists on only one teaching method for a long time, the students will certainly get bored. When fatigue sets in, interest wanes so that motivation is lost. There have been a great number of teaching methods which are claimed to be effective. It might be fair to say that each of them has its merits and drawbacks. While drawing on all the merits, the teacher should not be oblivious of the drawbacks. Effective techniques should be applied in turn. Moreover, the teacher should study and analyse new situations and specific problems in his/her class and work out his/her own suitable teaching methods.

6. Application of modern teaching aids

At present, unlike traditional teaching where only a blackboard could be used, language teaching can be done with modern teaching aids such as slides, tape recorders, TV sets, video recorders, radios and language laboratories. All of these, as long as they are utilized effectively, are very helpful to the development of the student's language skills, especially listening comprehension and oral English ability. It would be a big lose to effective teaching if the teacher were always to keep to the old track, failing to exploit modern teaching aids for language learning.

7. Field trips

Traditional teaching is carried out exclusively in the classroom. But in oral English classes, lots of things can be learned during field trips. For example, technical English conversation can be done more effectively in the laboratory, workshop or construction site. Everyday English conversation can be made with amazing results at railway stations, airports, historical sites and so on. Language practice during field trips normally challenges the students a lot, for in these cases, they will have to "use" English to communicate with people and overcome language barriers on their own.

8. After-class activities

It should be further pointed out that while concentrating efforts on classroom teaching, the teacher has to take into account the after-class language learning activities of the students. However long the scheduled time may be, it is not enough for the practice needed. The students must be motivated to develop diversified activities of their own after class, making full use of every chance to increase listening comprehension by listening to radio and tapes, watching TV programmes and conversing with English-speaking people. This serves not only to enhance the students' ability but also to strengthen their confidence in the target language. The more one is exposed to the language environment in and out of class, the more one is likely to learn.

In sum, the students in an intensified language study class, as in any human endeavour, should be motivated to make learning fruitful. The teacher should always make motivation a priority and use every effective method available in teaching. Once the students are motivated, they will devote more and more time and energy to pursuing their academic careers on their own, not only in class, but after class and their initiative will be brought into full play to reach not only the present goal, but, more importantly, the self-established goals.

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ADAPTING ORAL ENGLISH MATERIALS FOR USE IN CHINA

Stephen Bahry & Huang Qian

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Recently the importance of teaching communication in oral English is recognized more and more by English teachers in China. Unfortunately, there are some problems in applying this recognition in the classroom. The main problem in teaching oral English in China using communicative methods is the lack of convenient and appropriate materials. Another problem is that many teachers in China have had little training in oral English teaching techniques and have little opportunity to learn how to use oral English textbooks. Most well-developed oral English materials using communicative methods are found in textbooks published outside China. Depending on these non-Chinese materials, however, creates problems for teachers in China. It is quite difficult for teachers in China to use these texts successfully.

The first problem is one of the inconvenience. These books are not easily available in China and it is quite expensive to bring in class sets from outside. Even if teachers have single reference copies, the exercises in these books often need to be photocopied for the students, another example of the inconvenience of depending on such materials.

The second problem is that although the textbook materials are often extremely good, the exercises as written are quite inappropriate for Chinese students studying in China. The materials often require a good deal of knowledge of some other culture for the students to be able to use them at all. And of course, many ESL rather than EFL texts, are designed to be used by immigrants or foreign students residing in a country and contain much information of no relevance to someone who is neither an immigrant nor a foreign student. So these kinds of materials although highly useful in the context for which they were originally designed, are in China both unfamiliar to and inappropriate to Chinese students.

An example of a textbook with many useful discussion activities is *Can't Stop Talking* by George Rocks. Unit 4 consists of an exercise entitled "Editing a Newspaper". In this exercise students are given a worksheet representing the first two pages of a newspaper. They are also given a list of imaginary news story headlines representing the day's news. The group is required to play the role of the editorial board, the committee which makes decisions concerning which news stories to include in the paper, which page to print them on and how much space to devote to them. So the students are required to exchange opinions, give and ask for reasons, make and ask for suggestions, etc.

This type of exercise is an excellent way to motivate students to speak. It helps the students develop their fluency and confidence in Oral English. Unfortunately, it cannot easily be used in China. First of all, to use the worksheet you need to have either a class set of the text or easy access to a photocopier. Secondly, the list of imaginary headlines presents problems. Many of them refer to information which might not be familiar to the students. The headlines are for an imaginary Chicago newspaper, so they are interesting only from a US point of view. These difficulties make such an exercise much less effective than it would have been if used in the United States with immigrants to the US.

So that can be done when an otherwise excellent text has much foreign-centred content inappropriate to or of low interest to Chinese students? Some teachers may use the material exactly as written in the textbook, generally with poor results. Others tend to avoid using this type of activity, since proper materials are not available. These are both incorrect approaches. The best choice, we think, is to adapt the materials to be more appropriate and interesting, or to use them as a model for developing materials in China. The criticisms we have made of foreign communicative oral English materials have not been of the objectives or of the method used in such exercises, but only of the specific content. Therefore, we can use these materials to develop exercises in China, by keeping the objectives and methods used in the exercises the same, and by adapting the specific content to be more suitable to the actual teaching conditions in China.

As an example of how an exercise from a foreign textbook can be adapted, let us outline an adaptation of the same lesson from *Can't Stop Talking* which has been used at the Canada/China Language Centre in Beijing. We have used this in our classes with great success. The students all participated eagerly in this activity and had no difficulty in finding something to say. The main change is that instead of relying on headlines provided by the textook, you choose your own:

1. Using recent copies of *China Daily*, choose about 15 headlines. Perhaps 5 from the front page, 5 from the sports and entertainment pages and 5 from the other pages.
2. Put these 15 headlines on the blackboard or the overhead projector.
3. Explain to the students that their group is in charge of selecting the stories for a newsletter.
4. The newsletter has only 2 pages. There is also only enough space for 5 stories on each page, so they are allowed to choose only 10 stories. The students have to decide together which 5 stories to reject and also which page to put the remaining stories on.
5. The students are not given criteria according to which they can make these decisions; they must discuss this among themselves as well. Some will prefer to select stories according to how interesting a story is; others will prefer to choose according to how important a story is. For the purpose of encouraging the students to discuss and solve a problem in English, it makes no difference.

Since this activity relies on *China Daily*, there are two results: one is that the teacher need not have a set of textbooks or a photocopier available to do the lesson, the other is that the headlines are generally familiar to, interesting to and appropriate to English students in China.

A further benefit of using adapted materials of the type just mentioned is that they can frequently be changed slightly to produce many new activities, or sometimes they can be used again. For example, if a discussion activity is needed, this particular activity can be repeated, since the China Daily headlines used and the reasons the students give for choosing them change each time the exercise is done.

It's also not necessary to do the exercise exactly the same way every time, the method can be varied slightly to make the exercise more interesting when repeated. For example, instead of giving the students a list of headlines which we have chosen, if a class set of *China Daily* is available, we can give each group a newspaper and ask them to choose stories themselves. The task we give the students can also be varied: for example, ask the members of a group to decide together which stories are the most interesting, or most important, etc.

This type of exercise can be called either a ranking exercise or a consensus exercise. This is because the students are asked to form a consensus about how to put some set of topics in order. The students must use many different oral English skills at once to perform this kind of exercise so they can greatly improve their fluency with such exercises. The format of this newspaper activity is essentially similar to the format of any other ranking-type discussion activity.

So once you become familiar with this type of activity, it can easily be adapted into activities with completely different topics. For example, instead of ranking news stories, students can be asked to rank other familiar items, for example, cities in China. Students can be given the task of deciding the ideal itinerary for a two-week tour of China. Here are the instructions for the students:

1. Tell the students they are working for the China International Travel Service. It is the responsibility of each group to design the most interesting possible two-week tour of China.
2. The students need to discuss together and decide:
   (a) How many places there is time to visit in 2 weeks.
   (b) Which places should be visited during the tour.
   (c) What order the places should be visited in.
   (d) The students also need to give their reasons for the itinerary they suggest.

Another possible topic could be a discussion on "What are the ideal characteristics of a spouse?" This topic is of great interest to students (the first time), but the exercise can be constructed in essentially the same way as the previous exercises. Instead of ranking news stories, famous scenic spots or cities, the students are ranking personal characteristics. Here are the instructions the students need:

1. The students suggest various characteristics as being important in marriage.
2. Then they should give reasons why the characteristics they suggested are more important than other characteristics.
3. They should try, if possible, to arrive at a consensu on which characteristics are the most important ones in a spouse.

These exercises have been used by both Chinese and Canadian teachers with great success at our Centre. The exercises are interesting for the students to do, yet none of them requires any special equipment, nor do the students need textbooks. The main requirement is for the teachers to have some materials available for their own reference to help them in getting ideas. As we can see, ranking exercises in general can easily be adapted to create new exercises and frequently, newly-adapted exercises can themselves be changed to develop even more exercises. The possibilities are virtually endless. So the main advantages of developing or adapting your own materials for teachers of oral English are:

1. less dependence on textbooks and photocopiers
2. more familiar, interesting and appropriate material
3. greater flexibility than textbook materials

Teachers of English in China, *particularly* Chinese teachers, know their students well. They are the best judges of what is too unfamiliar, inappropriate and uninteresting to the students. New methods and materials for teaching Oral English can be used successfully in China as long as we do not follow them blindly but use our understanding of the students to adapt materials or use them to develop other oral English materials suitable for use in China.

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July, 1991 Volume [illegible] Number 1
Juillet, 1991 Tome [illegible] Numero 1

Monday Morning/Lundi Matin

A magazine for language teachers in China

Revue pour les professeurs de langues en [illegible]

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亲爱的读者：

我们新的一期《 Monday Morning/Lundi Matin 》与诸位见面了。这是我们中国——加拿大语言中心全体人员奉献给朋友们的一份礼物。

中国——加拿大语言中心承担中方赴加项目人员的语言、文化培训任务。中国、加拿大教师朝夕相处，互相切磋，共同研究，在教学和学术研究方面取得了明显的成果。这本小册子就是双方辛勤笔耕的体现。另外，还有其他朋友也给这本杂志撰文，为中国——加拿大友好大厦加砖添瓦。我对他们表示深切的谢意。

编一本学术杂志，实非易事。我们的编辑、加拿大教师 Ken Keobke 和 Pat Donnelly 为此花费了大量时间和精力。因此，他们受到赞扬是当之无愧的。

最后，我对所有关心本杂志的朋友表示由衷的感谢。

愿中国——加拿大两国人民的友谊万古长青！

北京师范大学
中国——加拿大语言中心
中方主任　袁行槊

一九九一年六月

Preface

Since the late 1970's, China has been the centre of many exciting experiments in L2 teaching. In cooperation with institutions such as the British Council and the CCLC, Chinese universities have set up a series of research and curriculum projects to determine the best way of integrating traditional Chinese teaching methods influenced by Confucian philosophy with the communicative approach based on more modern theories of learning. For example, how does one reconcile memorization, rule learning and reading out loud-all highly successful Chinese methods for L2 learning-with more student-centred learning where the emphasis is on fluency and message communication rather than accuracy? The results of these experiments are being made known through presentations at international conferences, in books such as English in China (Dzau, 1990) and ELT in China (ISTEC, 1990) and in journals such as *Monday Morning/Lundi matin,* and *Foreign Language Teaching and Research.* These publications are very promising.

As we move toward the year 2000, I think that we can look forward to a decade of burgeoning research and pedagogical innovation in China. I hope that we at the CCLC will be here to report on it for you.

Finally, as Academic Advisor of the CCLC, I would especially like to thank Ken Keobke and Pat Donnelly, our editors, for all their work in collecting, organizing and editing this issue of *Monday Morning/Lundi matin.*

Bob Courchêne, Ph.D.
Academic Advisor
CCLC

Avant-Propos

Depuis les années 70, la Chine est le lieu de plusieurs expériences pédagogiques avant-gardistes. Les institutions chinoises impliquées dans l'enseignement des langues ont entrepris des projets dans le ''testing'', l'élaboration du matériel, et les stratégies d'intervention dans la salle de classe, afin de déterminer la meilleure façon d'arriver à un mariage harmonieux entre la tradition chinoise et la tradition dite communicative. Comment peut-on intégrer la mémorisation et la répétition d'une salle de classe centrée sur l'enseignant avec les jeux de rôle et les activités axées sur la communication d'une salle de classe centrée sur l'apprenant?

Est-ce que tout ce qui vient de l'étranger est de facto supérieur? Nous, les étrangers, n'avons-nous pas aussi de quoi apprendre auprès de nos collègues chinois? Bien que de récentes publications portant sur l'enseignement des L2 en Chine publient de plus en plus de réponses, complètes ou embryonnaires, à ces questions, le chemin s'annonce encore long et laborieux.

Dans *Monday Morning/Lundi matin,* nous vous offrons une gamme de communications sur des sujets divers dans l'enseignement des langues secondes et étrangères. Nous ressentons une grande satisfaction à observer le nombre d'articles écrits par nos collègues chinois(es). Leur contribution à notre publication est très précieuse.

En conclusion, j'aimerais remercier les éditeurs, Ken Keobke et Pat Donnelly pour leur excellent travail de compilation et leur enthousiasme à publier ce numéro de notre journal.

Bonne lecture à tous!

Bob Courchêne, Ph. D.
Conseiller académique

MONDAY MORNING/LUNDI MATIN

A MAGAZINE FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN CHINA
REVUE POUR PROFESSEURS DE LANGUES EN CHINE

July, 1991, Volume 4, Number 1
Juillet, 1991, Tome 4, Numéro 1

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A DESCRIPTION OF THE CANADA/CHINA LANGUAGE CENTRE

What is the Canada/China Language Centre?

The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) at Beijing Normal University is one of two components of the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program managed for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) by Saint Mary's University in Halifax.

The other component of this project is the three Regional Orientation Centres at various universities across Canada. The Project was established in 1983 by CIDA. The goal of the project is to provide, in China and in Canada, language and cultural preparation for Chinese professionals who receive work/study, technical or academic training in Canada and to contribute to the improvement of the teaching of English and French in China. The Regional Orientation Centres also provide orientation for Canadian professionals going to work in China.

What does the CCLC do?

Every year the CCLC administers two language proficiency examinations so that candidates eligible for study at the CCLC can be identified. Those eligible for study at the CCLC follow an eighteen week programme in English or French. The CCLC is a cooperative programme with Canadian and Chinese teachers working together in teaching teams. By working closely together and through formal teacher training, the staff develop communicative language teaching programmes which meet the students' language needs.

The Language Programme

The programme at the CCLC is based on the communicative approach to language learning and teaching. The communication needs of the learners are identified first and these form the basis of the learning objectives. The language that the trainees will need for their educational or job related activities and social survival in Canada is stressed. The emphasis is on students being able to use language for the communication tasks they need to carry out in real life. In order to make the teaching interesting and suitable for the individual learning styles of the students the teachers use a variety of methods. The classroom is learner centred with the teacher acting as a facilitator or manager of learning. Students often role play situations and work in groups or pairs.

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DESCRIPTION DU CENTRE LINGUISTIQUE CANADA/CHINE

Le Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine, c'est quoi?

Le Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine (CLCC) de l'Université Normale de Beijing est l'une des deux composantes du programme linguistique et culturel Canada/Chine. Le programme est administré par l'Université Saint Mary's de Halifax pour le compte de l'Agence Canadienne de Développement International (ACDI). Les trois centres régionaux d'orientation, que l'on retrouve dans diverses universités à travers le Canada, forment l'autre composante. Créé en 1983 par l'ACDI, le projet a pour but d'offrir, tant en Chine qu'au Canada, une formation linguistique et culturelle à des professionnels chinois. Ces derniers font des stages d'études et de travail au Canada, participent à des programmes de formation technique ou complètent des études universitaires. De plus, le CLCC a pour mandat de contribuer à l'amélioration de la qualité de l'enseignement du francais et de l'anglais en Chine. Quand aux centres régionaux d'orientation, ils offrent également des stages d'orientation à des professionnels canadiens appelés à travailler en Chine.

Que fait le CLCC?

Chaque année, le CLCC fait passer des tests d'évaluation linguistique afin de recruter des candidats pour les programmes d'études au Canada ou au CLCC. Les personnes admissibles suivent un cours d'immersion de 18 semaines en français ou en anglais. Le CLCC a adopté une formule coopérative regroupant des professeurs canadiens et chinois au sein d'une même équipe de travail. Une étroite collaboration et un programme spécial de formation pédagogique permettent du développer des méthodes d'enseignement qui répondent aux besoins des étudiants(es).

Le programme d'enseignement des langues

Le programme d'enseignement du CLCC a recours à une approche communicative pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la langue seconde. En premier lieu, le centre identifie les besoins de l'étudiant(e) afin de déterminer les objectifs d'apprentissage. Le CLCC met l'accent sur un vocabulaire de base qui permettra au stagiaire de fonctionner lors de son séjour au Canada, que ce soit dans le cadre d'un programme d'études, en milieu de travail, ou dans toute situation de la vie courante. On tient à ce que l'étudiant(e) puisse assimiler un vocabulaire qui lui permettra de fonctionner lorsqu'il (elle) sera plongé(e) dans une situation réelle. Pour rendre l'enseignement dynamique et pour s'assurer que les cours répondent bien aux besoins des étudiants (es), les professeurs utilisent différentes méthodes d'enseignement. La salle de classe devient un véritable laboratoire d'apprentissage où sous la direction du professeur les étudiants(es) recréent des situations. Ils travaillent souvent en groupe ou en équipe.

EDITORIAL

We are particularly pleased to bring you this issue of *Monday Morning/Lundi matin* as it contains more Chinese contributions than any of our previous efforts. At the same time, this issue features three articles by CCLC staff: Wu Mingming writes on the relationship between Confucianism and traditional Chinese education; Ann Smith discusses team teaching; and Bob Courchêne reflects on his increasing empathy with second language learners as he documents his own struggle in learning Chinese.

Our sole contribution from outside China is University of Malaya instructors Kengsoon Soo and Yeokhwa Ngeow's view of social and personal factors relating to language learning. This is followed by Lian Xian on the integration of the teaching of productive skills and Zhao Xiaodong on the communicative method in the Chinese context.

He Zaojiang gives suggestions for improving Chinese students' pronunciation of English and articles by Tian Hailong and Jin Youcheng both explore problems of increasing Chinese students' English vocabulary.

Recent years have seen the increasing use of high technology such as video in the Chinese language classroom. Xu Wei discusses some methods of making the best use of this medium.

We hope that you are inspired to put the many ideas in this issue to work in your own classroom and will consider the call for papers found at the end of this volume as a serious invitation to write on your own practical experiences for improving the teaching of English or French in China.

Finally, our special thanks to Huang Jianhua and Suzanna Basciano for their thoughtful assistance in the preparation of this issue.

Pat Donnelly and Ken Keobke

The Influence of Affective Factors in Learning A Second Language

Kengsoon Soo & Yeokhwa Ngeow

In Malaysia, Chinese, Malays and Indians, each with their own mother tongues, make up the population. English is a second language that everyone learns in school. For the Chinese and Indians, the picture is a little more complicated. Malay is the medium of instruction as well as the national language but since it is not their mother tongue, English is actually a third language they are acquiring simultaneously with Malay.

The scope for interference is awesome. A learner will have to deal with mother-tongue interference in learning English and mother-tongue interference learning Malay and cross-interference between English and Malay in the learning of both languages. At the end of the day, if the students succeed in learning English, such a conscious and laborious effort must have been made that it can be assumed there must have been extremely strong motivation to learn. Indeed motivation is recognized to be essential to learning, or for that matter, to any human enterprise. Motivation can be defined as the emotions and needs that constitute the source of the drive to expend the effort required to learn a second language. These emotions and needs may arise from within the learner himself, that is, intrinsic motivation or due to factors outside himself, that is, extrinsic motivation. But motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic must be sparked off by a positive attitude. Attitude refers to states of emotions and thoughts relating to English and to the culture of English speaking peoples. However, attitude itself is shaped by various affective factors in the language learner's environment which interact in a complex chain of reactions and inter-reactions. Affective factors may be defined as any entities or situations which influence the language learning process. Affective factors can be broadly discussed in terms of public, social, learning and personal factors.

Public Factors

Public factors refer to policies or situations which affect the entire country as a whole. The most important public factor would be the official attitude towards English. Any language program will require official support in such matters as funding and allotment of teaching time in order to achieve the goals of the program. In Malaysia, the government puts great emphasis on the teaching and learning of Malay, the national language, which is viewed as the instrument to create a united society out of the different races that make up the nation. Malay gradually replaced English as the medium of instruction at all levels of education and in official communication in a ten-year transitional period between 1970-1980. This was reinforced by the requirement of a compulsory pass in the subject at the O Level nation-wide examination as well as making a credit in the subject one of the criteria for entry and confirmation in the Civil Service. English in now taught only as a subject and is allocated only 17% of total classroom time in the primary schools and 12.5% in secondary schools. This heavy emphasis on Malay creates-perhaps unintentionally-a relative de-emphasis on English.

Contact with the target language such as through reading materials, for example, does have a beneficial effect in the learning of a second language. Considering the little time available in the classroom, Malaysian students have inadequate exposure to English especially when they are using an inductive approach which emphasizes practice. The students, being hard pressed for time, would allocate minimal time for learning English. This neglect of English is further reinforced by the lack of a need to achieve in learning English as passing or failing English has no real bearing on the students' overall grade in the national examinations. The official attitude towards English is, therefore, instrumental in promoting a lackadaisical attitude among the majority of Malaysian students. This attitude, once formed, decreases motivation towards English and its learning which ultimately results in negative achievement.

On the other hand, not all Malaysian students react to the official attitude in this way. Bearing in mind that more than half the population does not speak Malay as their mother tongue, it is possible that some of them see the imposition of Malay as a form of indirect political oppression. With regard to official attitudes, Anderson (1985: 63) has pointed out that one can react negatively in three ways: confrontation, passive resistance or passive acceptance. Negative reactions can result in a greater motivation to learn English simply for the fact that it is perceived to be neglected by the government. This is, of course, indirect confrontation and it exists only among extremely anti-establishment elements. Those who resist passively tend to harden their attitudes slowly but ultimately, all things being equal, they too will end up in the confrontation camp. Those who accept passively will not resist the change but will not actively encourage it either. This inertia makes change more difficult. Nevertheless, within this group, during this passive period, public factors will take second place to the other factors in that other factors may overcome the inertia. In any nation which seeks to impose a single language among its people where there were many before, it is likely that all three categories exist in fluctuating numbers, side by side. Whichever camp wins depends on other affective factors.

Social Factors

Social factors refer to factors in the student's society which influence his learning of English. In Malaysia, one cannot look at society as a homogeneous whole. The major races in this country are not integrated in any real sense of the word. Therefore, in using the word 'society', the intended meaning is that of the learner's ethnic group. It is not absurd to assume that the different ethnic groups (hereafter referred to as societies) have different attitudes towards English and the opinions, attitudes and beliefs of one ethnic group have minimal influence on members of the other ethnic groups. This will have a direct bearing on the individual learner because in language learning, as in all other kinds of learning, the social network is a force to be reckoned with. Berelson and Steiner (1964: 574) said "there appears to be little lasting development of opinions, attitudes and beliefs that is independent" of parental or group influences. In the Malaysian context then, one must look at social factors from the view-points of the three different societies.

The Malays have traditionally viewed the British as colonial overlords and by extension, oppressors and enemies. By extension, the Malays' attitude towards English cannot be too positive. This is borne out by occasional disparaging remarks about English and fluent Malay speakers of English are tagged as 'being unpatriotic' or 'showing off'. Certainly this is not true with every Malay but as the Malays' attitude towards English is poor, motivation towards learning English cannot be high either. The Chinese attitude towards English may be more positive. Due to a tradition of seeking education outside their homeland, the Chinese, to a large extent, view English as a key to a better future. Logically, their motivation towards learning English will be more positive which will translate into better achievement.

Of course, attitude and motivation are more subject to change when people are subject to cross-pressures. Berelson and Steiner (1964: 583) said "By and large, a cross-pressured person tends to change towards the prevailing attitude of the most favored reference group. Consider a Malay working in the private sector. His working place may be heavily staffed by members of other societies who may speak English as a common language. In order to assimilate, he may be motivated to master English". Nevertheless, as Leibowitz (1970) has pointed out, the reverse of the above is also true. "People will likely not change their (attitude) when they perceive that they are not accepted by a group to which they wish to belong, or at least they will become terribly frustrated". The said Malay worker's attitude towards English may become negative if he perceives that learning English does not make his colleagues accept him into their inner circle. In retaliation for their rejection of him, he may reject them and their common language which he has been trying to learn. Rightly or wrongly, the Chinese by and large regard the private sector as their source of employment. In the private sector, English is still the prime language in use by far. Since the Chinese look to the private sector for their livelihood, it is logical to assume that the Chinese have far greater motivation to learn English as their economic survival and well-being depend on it. Such motivation by and large, may not exist among the Malays because, rightly or wrongly, they regard the public sector as their main hope of employment where the use of English is optional, if not actually discouraged. Of course the economic situation is not uniform throughout the country. In the rural areas, even the private sector uses Malay as the lingua franca. Motivation of learning English in the rural areas can drop to nearly nil as there are neither integrative nor instrumental reasons for it. This would affect all societies.

Cultural Factors

Culture too may affect the learning of a second language. Anderson (1985: 35) uses the Indonesian peasant as an example. "The peasant is said to be strongly egalitarian, to the extent of making sure that s/he does not even appear to excel at the expense of her/his fellows". Certainly, this mentality of politeness exists among the most conservative Malays too. This unwillingness to 'show off' one's superior ability which will by implication make one's peers lose face can reduce the effectiveness of current teaching methods. Communicative syllabi require the students to make mistakes and learn from them. The Chinese (in Malaysia) are considered more aggressive and may have an advantage in learning English in that they are more willing to take risks, make mistakes, ask questions and make still more mistakes in order to learn. This aggressive approach may well be exactly what the doctor recommends in learning a second language. Societies which are more wary of losing face or making others lose face may not benefit as much from the current methods of teaching English.

Learning Factors

Learning factors are factors of the learning process itself which influence the learner's response to the learning process. One of the most important factors in the classroom is the teacher. Wolfram and Fasold (1974: 179) consider the teacher's interaction with the student more crucial than the amount of time spent in the classroom which itself is of crucial importance to a second language student. Teacher attitudes towards students can have a profound effect on the student's performance. Students whom their teachers were led to believe to be gifted invariably perform better than their classmates. Therefore, teachers should not infer that their students lack intelligence merely because they use non-standard speech. The teacher's response to his student' errors in the classroom will set the tone for the child's learning. Unless language is seen as separate from the second language learner, the teacher, in rejecting the variety of language a person speaks, may unintentionally reject the person as well. Rejection will not motivate anyone to master English.

When the educational system teaches one thing but society practices another, an obvious conflict arises. A child using non-standard English will be told by his teacher that certain language patterns he is using are wrong. But the child hears the same non-standard English being used effectively by adults and older children all the time outside and maybe even inside school. The constant proof that non-standard English is adequate for the communication needs of the people closest to him will overwhelm the occasional remarks he hears from his English teacher to the contrary. And so although an English as a Second Language student may intellectually admit that the English he speaks is not standard, he nevertheless persists in speaking that non-standard variety of the language because it is accepted by society at large. This phenomenon is called 'covert prestige'; that is, there is pride in using the language, even though the variety is generally considered non-standard, as it has the function of identifying the speaker with other members of an ethnic group.

In Malaysia, the majority of English teachers feels it is part of their duty to upgrade the non-standard dialect of their students and the students are constantly told that the English they have always known to be an efficient tool of communication is wrong and sub-standard. Negative attitudes towards the teacher and the learning process set in and the whole chain-reaction starts. A teacher who has no socio-psycholinguistic framework to guide him in motivating his students may go through his career with great ideals but, in fact, may actually be undercutting pupils' desire for achievement. The classroom is all important not merely for teaching. It is the ground on which the battle in either erecting an insurmountable barrier in the mind of the child so that he is likely never to want to learn standard English again or in motivating the child to develop standard English is won or lost.

Personal Factors

In talking of personal factors, one refers to factors within the second language learner himself which influence his language learning process. Cognitive style is an important part of the second language learning process. Cognitive style is the way that people perceive, conceptualize, and organize information. This can shift over time. Cognitive style can be divided into field dependent or field independent. Field dependent cognitive style is a global cognitive style where the individual fails to differentiate parts of a 'field' from the general background. Field independent cognitive style is used by people who identify, organize, and impose their own structures on the parts of the field. The ability to separate out pieces from a whole is useful in language learning. For example, it enables one to attend to such things as morphemes or other functional markers. Field independence has been shown to be one of the best predictors of success in second language learning. Field independence is considered to be even more important in classroom instruction than the amount of time spent in the class. Students who use study methods that agree with their cognitive style preferences achieve better results than those who don't. In the Malaysian context, where schools share a common pre-determined syllabus, language learners cannot choose the methodology of their classes. This means that a large portion of language learners are doomed to under-learn because the methodology in practice does not agree with their cognitive styles unless the teacher exercises flexibility in her teaching style.

Learning strategies are another important factor in determining success or failure in language learning. Learning strategies are the techniques or devices a learner may use to acquire knowledge. Successful learners employ common strategies and techniques of learning which contribute to their success. The good learner is actively involved in the learning task and he develops and uses specific study techniques unlike the poor learner who does not adopt or develop any effective study habits. The good learner constantly searches for meaning by whatever method available while the poor learner does not treat his failure to understand as a challenge. The good language learner is a willing and accurate guesser and seeks every available opportunity to bring his newly acquired competence into use. Of course, in doing so, he is likely to make mistakes and he must be undeterred by embarrassment over his mistakes in his struggle to master a second language.

Age too, has frequently been cited as an important factor in language learning. Learners who were exposed to English in school at a later age got higher scores on syntax and morphology. Those who began at a younger age score higher on pronunciation. In short, the older the learners, the better they did, except for free oral production. In the long term, the ones who started earlier caught up. Assuming this is true, the Malaysian Teaching English as a Second Language context stands the process on its head by insisting that older learners be proficient in speech.

In conclusion, learning a second language is not just a question of knowledge or practice. Grammar drills, communicational practice and whatever new methods that one may be using currently all play a part in the language learning process. However, we must never forget that a language learner is, first and foremost, a human being with the peculiar needs and weaknesses that go with being human. Success or failure in learning a second language is more likely due to a complex interaction of a myriad of factors. Teachers have frequently voiced their frustration at the impossibility of isolating the cause of a particular effect. At this point in time, it can only be concluded that is indeed life.

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Integration of Productive Skills in an EFL Classroom

Lian Xian

Not until recent years has the productive side of EFL teaching been given adequate consideration in China. Based on the audio-lingual method which is still wide-spread in China, however, the more favoured approach to teach is to follow the sequence of listening, speaking, reading and writing, with writing being the last and most difficult task. Despite the fact that "integration" is no longer a new term in the classroom, speaking and writing are usually less emphasized in curriculum and more likely to be isolated from each other. In this paper, I attempt to discuss the feasibility of integrating the productive skills in a single class, with a presentation of the teaching material which I have devised and applied in a class of 20 second-year English majors.

Theoretical Background

The principle of integration is thought to be very important (Widdowson, 1978). It seems that one skill cannot be performed without another, and the same topic may lead to the use of two or more skills. It is, therefore, the teacher's responsibility to promote skill integration at all times, though he may focus activities on speaking or writing at one stage and then shift the focus to another. Meanwhile, any skill may be used as the basis for practicing other skills. For example, reading and listening as means of language input can hardly be eliminated.

As for productive skills, it is often a good idea to treat writing as a channel of foreign language learning (Wingard, 1981). The essence of teaching writing can be defined here as writing to learn. Alternatively, we can stress learning to write, or what is labeled by Wingard as "writing as a goal", concentrating on one kind of genuine writing model used in the real world for the learner to follow and inserting on occasion some speaking tasks for the purpose of variety.

Another choice may be that speaking and writing are treated as equally important in one course. The teacher may deal with one or the other in turn to increase the learner's awareness of the different features of spoken and written discourse. Assuming that it may not be necessary to separate rigidly "writing as a means of reinforcement" from "writing as a goal" in certain circumstances, we can sometimes blur the distinction.

The Procedure and Techniques

Based on J. Harmer (1983), there are three stages that constitute a skill-oriented framework for teaching:

Stage 1: Introducing New Language
Stage 2: Guided Practice
Stage 3: Communicative Activities

The first stage is aimed at helping the learner to assimilate facts about new language and enable him to produce new language for the first time with materials in control, and with accuracy and/or appropriateness as a primary concern.

For writing practice, this stage seems to correspond in many ways to what Pincas (1982) called familiarization and controlled writing types of exercises. The purpose is to prepare the learner for less controlled production of their own. The students are required to identify and evaluate the new items and then put them in a strictly directed practice (e.g. substitution and copying) in which the learner has virtually "no freedom to make mistakes" (Pincas, 1982: 91).

It should be noted, however, that one of the major differences between spoken and written language lies in structure: one is loosely constructed with hesitation, repetition, rephrasing, slips, etc., while the other is well-planned and carefully constructed. Here arises a question of "spoken language models and feasibility" (Brown and Yule, 1983). It seems to be reasonable for a teacher to hold a more relaxed attitude to errors in speaking and shift his focus from accuracy to appropriateness in dealing with conversational language.

According to Harmer, the second stage serves as a bridge between the two extremes of the communication continuum. On one end stands control (+) and communication (-), while on the other, communication (+) and control (-).

Since learning is an emotional experience, one of our concerns, as suggested by Hutchinson and Waters (1987), should be developing the learner's positive attitude and making the materials and activities as motivating and interesting as possible. Two of the techniques Harmer calls personalization and localization seem to be particularly valuable in that they are meant to stimulate the learner's immediate motivation to use recently learnt language to convey real messages (usually true statements) to each other. In addition, the teacher can prompt the use of additional remarks and follow-up questions to encourage realistic communication.

In oral practice, attention should be paid to how'to reduce stress in tasks of guided practice. In other words, it is important to try to make the learner feel comfortable in practicing what he wants to say, and to avoid any unfavorable factors, such as the teacher's presence as a silent participant in a pair/group work.

In writing practice, such techniques as completion, reproduction and transformation (Pincas, 1982) can be adopted to give the learner an outline to expand or a new subject to write about in the same way as what is demonstrated.

The activities in the last stage, as Harmer claims, should comply with certain characteristics of real communication. Measures need to be taken to make the learner have a desire to communicate with a specific purpose and to get rid of the teacher's intervention.

Nevertheless, there often exists a contradiction between the learner's free writing practice and the teacher's dilemma when faced with a composition full of errors. It is therefore necessary that the teacher should make a distinction between "the free writing as a classroom exercise" and "the normal free writing of everyday life" (Pincas, 1982). Otherwise it would be a danger to expect the learner to acquire the ability to write anything freely beyond what has been taught. In order to minimize the unexpected errors, the teacher should be very careful in selecting the appropriate preparatory tasks.

In what follows, I shall report in brief my own experience in a 2-hour unit of classroom teaching with a focus on productive skills. My lesson plan reflects the three stages mentioned above. The principle of learning as an emotional experience is taken into account in the classroom, and the technique of personalization is being adopted. In the guided oral practice, there is an intention to minimize communicative stress. For the written output of the last stage, the major concern is selecting the task with great care in order to ensure limited errors and meanwhile to make the activity as communicative as possible.

Practice in Classroom

Context: a book-club

Aids: 3 sets of worksheets. (1A + 1B each contain pictures of 4 book covers as well as brief introductions to the books. Worksheet 2 is a chart with columns for order number, title, category, publisher's price and club price.

Step 1: Starter

Make a few remarks on buying a book and joining a book club. Ask questions like "What do you want to know about a book before you buy it?", "Have you ever been a member of any book club?", etc.

Step 2: New language-categorization

Present the functional language for (1) inquiring about the category, e.g. "What kind of book is it?"; (2) categorizing, e.g. "This book is on sports/history/...". With exemplification, explain that the category can be either general or more specific.

Step 3: Pair work-an information gap exercise

The two sets of worksheets with different illustrations and blurbs on the books are given respectively to Student A and B in each pair-one gets Worksheet 1(A) and the other gets 1(B). They are not allowed to look at each other's sheets. Then everyone gets Worksheet 2, with the task of trying to fill in the chart. Except for a few items which can be found on one's own sheet (A or B), one cannot get the information needed to complete the form until s/he consults and negotiates with his/her partner. The new language for categorization is referred to and repeatedly put into practice in the conversation.

Step 4: Group work

Students with Worksheet 1(A) are divided into two groups; so are the other half of the class. In groups of five, they exchange notes with one another, make revisions or argue against other people's choices. Then some write their answers for individual items on the blackboard before the teacher summarizes the activities and offers feedback.

Step 5: Writing stimulated by the previous task

Having made a decision as to which book is his/her preference, students complete the sentence "If I were a member of the club, this month I would buy______(the title of the chosen book)". Then two or three sentences are added to state the reason for the choice. After that, students in pairs again read each other's version and make possible peer corrections. The teacher now works as a prompter (Harmer, 1983).

Step 6: "The bestseller(s)"

By going around and polling the rest of the class, each student acts as a journalist to record public opinion to see which book(s) earned the most favour and why. At last, the result of the survey (with little variation) is elicited and one (or two) book(s) is/are thus honored as bestseller(s) of the month.

Step 7: Setting up a library

As homework, students write a less controlled piece of work based on what was just learnt, for a real communicative purpose. This is a short passage about one of his/her own books with the aim to recommend it to the rest of the class. The first sentence could be "The book I would like you to read is...." All the descriptions should be true, because all the books mentioned are to be presented to the class sometime later, along with a collection of the recommendation passages to build up a book exhibition. If students are really interested in exchanging books, the collection of books may be arranged as a small library.

Comment on Material and Methodology

It might be considered an impractical reform to use authentic materials in a Chinese EFL classroom and no textbooks at all. It is, indeed, difficult to get proper and substantial source materials from such foreign publications as I have chosen in this case, but it is not impossible. The deliberate change is proposed to make students experience a new world and get rid of the boredom of the "assembly-line" type of exercises in an ordinary textbook.

What we often see in a conventional textbook is a composition exercise at the end of each lesson/unit. This kind of writing usually jumps too far from the receptive to the productive side of language, leaving a big gap in between and without adequate preparation and instruction which students need. That is the main reason why writing tasks often fall flat in many situations.

It is hoped that through the step-by step practice suggested above, the students will feel more comfortable and confident to accomplish the writing tasks required.

Another major concern is trying to benefit students by using pair/group work. Both of the techniques are not yet popular in China for various reasons, but the question at present should be how pair/group work can be appropriately adopted rather than whether they can be adopted. Provided that students feel it fun and the task meaningful, pair/group work is effective.

My intention in general is to make the class go beyond the routine of teacher-centred learning and to exploit initiative and creativity from the students through problem-solving and co-operation in an easier and more relaxing atmosphere.

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The Communicative Approach and Classroom Practice

Zhao Xiaodong

Current theories on foreign language teaching emphasize a "communicative approach" designed primarily for the second or foreign language learners living outside the foreign community. This article aims to review the theoretical basis of the communicative approach with respect to social behaviour, language function and cultural diversity. Some considerations to keep in mind when applying the communicative approach in Chinese classroom situations will be discussed and modifications to traditional course offerings are recommended.

The Theoretical Basis of the Communicative Approach

According to Canale and Swain (1979),

> "A communicative approach is organized on the basis of communicative functions (e.g. apologizing, describing, inviting, promising), that a given learner or group of learners needs to know and emphasizes the ways in which particular grammatical forms may be used to express these functions appropriately" (p.1).

The communicative approach is designed to develop the learners' competence in using language. Chomsky (1965) describes competence as the linguistic system that an ideal native speaker of a given language has internalized. His focus is upon how the child understands and produces novel sentences, and is able to distinguish a grammatical from an ungrammatical sentence. In other words, he is concerned with how the child learns to master the grammatical structures of the language. However, Campbell and Wales (1970) argue that if we wish to understand language acquisition, then studies of how the child learns the grammatical and phonological systems are not enough. They go further and state that,

> "by far the most important linguistic ability is that of being able to produce or understand utterances which are not so much grammatical but, more important, appropriate to the context in which they are made" (p.247).

By considering a sentence in a real life situation one can see that linguistic competence alone is not enough for communication. For example, if a sentence such as "You should do it tomorrow" is spoken, it might be used as a strong command given by an angry teacher to his disobedient student. In this sense, it can imply the threat that "You'd better make sure you do it tomorrow, otherwise,...". But such a threat would not be implied when a teacher asks his student to do him a favour, in which case, "You should do it tomorrow" merely indicates when the act should occur. Focus on only the grammatical aspects of the sentence is clearly limited and uninformative as to what is really being communicated. Hymes (1972a) states that any theory of language must contain a sociological component. A theory of communicative competence must deal with notions of the "speech community, speech situation, speech event, speech act, fluent speaker, components of speech events, functions of speech, etc." (Hymes, 1972b: 53). Campbell and Wales (1970) suggest ways in which we may study the language with a view to discovering how communicative rather than just grammatical competence is developed.

The functions of language provide another way to study the communicative approach. It is only by looking at language in use or in its situational context that we are able to understand the functions served by a particular grammatical structure. For example, imperative sentences usually function as commands. However, the following two imperative sentences, "Be quiet" and "Have some tea", function differently depending on how and when they are used. Although these two sentences are structurally similar, their functions are quite different. The most likely function of the first sentence would be an order while the second sentence is not usually an order, but rather an offer. It is the situation rather than the grammatical structure that determines the meaning. Therefore, the internal organization of language is not arbitrary, but embodies a positive reflection of the functions that language has evolved to serve in the life situations. If we study how language is used, only then can we really understand its meaning. Johnson (1982) says "approaches which examine how structures are acquired without reference to how those structures are used, are not merely missing out a 'dimension'" (p.17), but are missing a vital component. Therefore, the functional perspective on language provides us with the rationale for suggesting that teaching only grammatical competence is not enough. Teaching language use should be a crucial component in foreign language teaching.

Cultural differences can affect the appropriateness of language used by foreign language learners. Widdowson (1978) points out that communicative functions are culture-specific in the same way as linguistic forms are language-specific. The conditions governing the appropriateness of language in the learner's first language are not necessarily the same as the conditions governing the same use of language in a foreign country. For example, the way of addressing people in Canada is different from that used in China. In Canada, a three-year-old can address a forty-year-old by his or her first name. This is considered inappropriate in China. The child exhibits politeness by calling the elder "uncle" or "aunt". This suggests that cultural differences, and the speaking rules of the foreign country as well, should be taught in the classroom. To some extent, foreign language learning is really foreign culture learning.

From the above review of the literature, a number of conclusions about the communicative approach can be drawn:

1. The communicative approach emphasizes that language should be learned through use, through communication. Based on this notion, "real" situations and "real" roles are created in classroom teaching. Thus, language can be learned as it is actually used in real communication. This approach fundamentally differs from the traditional grammatically oriented approach which separates language from use, situation, and role.
2. The communicative approach attempts to ensure that students have sufficient exposure to the target language. This exposure provides many opportunities for language acquisition to occur. The students are encouraged to create and internalize the language; they are not asked to learn the language by rote as the grammatically oriented approach requires. Therefore, the students' communicative competence can be built as they attempt to deal with a variety of language situations.
3. The communicative approach assumes that the students take the central role in learning. The students are granted a measure of freedom so as to find their own way of learning and are not simply dependent on listening to their teachers' lectures. The communicative approach requires a high degree of initiative from students. Rather than passive recipients of language, the students become active agents throughout the whole learning process. This is one of the critical differences between the traditional grammatically oriented approach and the communicative approach.
4. The communicative approach embraces all the language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. By integrating all four skill areas, students can not only develop these skills, but also constantly combine them in use as one does in "real life". In contrast, the grammatically oriented approach emphasizes reading in isolation and treats listening, speaking, reading and writing as separate subjects.

Some Considerations

The theory underlying the communicative approach better reflects the nature of language and the processes of language acquisition and language learning. However, in applying it to actual classroom practice, some considerations should be kept in mind.

First, there is little in the way of a foreign language environment for students. Students cannot get enough exposure to the target language. Shen (1985) investigated the difference in exposure to the target language between children learning a first language and the young adults learning English as a foreign language in China. A comparison shows that young adults' exposure to the target language is only 12.4% of that of children learning a first language. Because of this very limited language exposure, much instruction involves artificial and formal language lessons provided in a classroom setting. This makes it difficult for students to acquire "authentic" language. Besides this, facilities and equipment for teaching are inadequate and current books and magazines are not always available.

Secondly, as a result of the limited language exposure and the unfamiliarity with the culture reflected in the reading materials, it is hard for students to get direct access to the meaning of the language. They tend to process information in Chinese at semantic levels, but they are likely to process information in English at lower code levels, such as the morphological, phonologic and syntactic. Because students lack the necessary background knowledge, they are forced to rely more on the linguistic cues. Therefore, specific instruction in the nature of grammar is necessary and should not be abandoned.

Thirdly, adult Chinese students have already formed their own learning styles. As young adult students, their cognitive conceptions are fully developed. They usually want to know "how" and "why" as well as "what" and "when"; they study what has been said and attempt to use it in their future communications. In other words, they are more likely to learn the language in an analytic way with the help of their other knowledge. Therefore, deductive methods are not inappropriate.

Fourthly, the communicative classroom requires a teacher able to use the foreign language as fluently as a native speaker. However, the reality is that in foreign language teaching, most of the teachers are non-native speakers of English. The non-native teachers have their own language deficiencies and they are not always able to meet the conversational demands of their students. Teachers' language deficiencies may well hamper them from creating a genuinely communicative situation in their classroom.

Recommended Modifications

Considering the points mentioned above, it may be practical to consider how the strengths of both the traditional grammatically oriented methods and the communicative approach might be combined so as to create a method feasible in the Chinese classroom. The following modifications attempt to combine the advantages of both the traditional method and the communicative approach.

1. Integrating semantic and formal syllabi

   Since the traditional method focuses more on grammatical forms, and the communicative method focuses more on communicative skills, integrating the semantic and formal syllabi is necessary. Integrating the teaching of structure and meaning will depend to a great extent on the particular language items involved. Swan (1984) suggested that with difficult language problems, such as order in phrasal verbs, comparison of adjectives, and the subjunctive mood, it may be best to deal with problems of form before students attempt to use these forms to communicate. Less problematic grammar points can be taught simultaneously with work on a relevant notion or function. For instance, students might learn to use "can" in the context of a lesson on offering, or requesting, or talking about ability, ease and difficulty.

2. Integrating the teaching of language with the teaching of culture
Because language is so closely interwoven with every aspect of culture, the teaching of one automatically involves the teaching of the other. Therefore, while teaching language, the teacher should also teach cultural background knowledge. It is recommended that language teachers habitually begin their classes with a five minute presentation in the foreign language on culture topics. The topics, such as greetings, patterns of politeness, and customs, can help students understand the culture as they learn the language.
3. Creating communicative situations
Owing to the limited favorable conditions for foreign language learning, the language teacher should try his or her best to create communicative situations to compensate for the lack of environmental support. There are a variety of ways to do this; they include group activities, dialogues, and discussions.
4. Turning the teacher-centered class into a student-interactive class
In language teaching, teachers usually take up most of the time by giving lectures. The students are usually busy taking notes. There is little actual practice. This certainly inhibits the acquisition of communicative competence. Therefore, an effort needs to be made to turn the teacher-centered class into a more student-interactive class. Many methods can be used to get students interacting, including organizing small group discussions, having students tell each other stories, and providing opportunities for them to engage in role-playing. Practice in pairs should be given a lot of attention for it is efficient and convenient for teachers to handle and non-threatening and productive for students.
5. Employing the inductive and the deductive methods
The teacher should try to explain the rules as simply as possible while teaching grammar. Both deductive methods and inductive methods can be used alternatively. With the inductive method, the teacher presents examples from which the learner induces the relevant language rules. With the deductive method, the teacher states the rule and leads the learner in subsequently deducing examples. When using the deductive approach, the teacher should pay special attention to the way language points are presented, and try to provide them in appropriate, meaningful situations.

Combining the advantages of both the traditional method and the communicative approach can work well in teaching young adults in China.

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Problems of Chinese Students in Learning English Pronunciation

He Zaojiang

The central core of a language is formed by structures and a sound system. The sound system of a language consists of four elements: pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation. To master the sound system of a language, people need to understand the stream of speech, to hear the distinctive sound features and to approximate their production (Tiffen, 1969: 16-17). Most non-native speakers of any language speak with a "foreign" accent. The reason for these varying accents is that each language has a different set of phonemes and the learner transfers his own sounds to the language he is learning (Tiffen, 1969: 18). Pronunciation problems just like any other kind of learning problems, such as grammar or intonation, arise mainly out of the learner's mother-tongue (Tiffen and Williams, 1969: 18). The sounds that the learner has difficulty to transfer are usually those that do not occur in the learner's own language or differ from his mother-tongue (Leon, 1966: 69). This paper is an attempt to present the main problems some Chinese students have in learning English pronunciation by comparing their mother-tongue, Chinese, and the target language, English.

Each language has a different set of meaningful sound contrasts; i.e. phonemes. Thus English works on a twenty-two vowel (semivowel /w/ and /j/ included) and twenty-six consonant system; Chinese works on a thirty-five vowel and twenty-one consonant system. Both English vowels and consonants cause trouble for Chinese students. It is very hard to tell exactly what are the most difficult sounds, because the degree of difficulty varies individually, with the place the students come from and with the dialect the students speak, as China is such a big country with several dozen nationalities and over one hundred dialects. The following are the generally difficult English sounds; i.e. the sounds that do not occur in the Chinese language or differ from it. In the following groups, one English consonant is paired with one Chinese consonant, or more exactly, its nearest equivalent Chinese consonant.

English C	Word Example	=	Chinese C	Word Example
/p/	pea		/p/	pà 怕
/b/	bee		/b/	bǎo 宝
/t/	tea		/t/	tǐ 体
/d/	do		/d/	dì 地
/k/	cart		/k/	kāi 开
/g/	guide		/g/	gāo 高
/f/	food		/f/	fǎn 反
/h/	hat		/h/	hǎi 海
/m/	man		/m/	mín 民
/n/	name		/n/	nán 难
/s/	see		/s/	sōu 搜
/ls/	gets		/c/	cū 粗
/dʒ/	reads		/z/	zǎo 早
/ʒ/	pleasure		/r/	rén 人
/lᵊ/	lead		/l/	lì 利

Fourteen and a half out of twenty-six English consonants can be paired with Chinese consonants, as the above table shows. Still, some might be surprised by this number. Why half a consonant? The English language has two forms of pronunciation for the consonant /l/. One is called clear /lᵊ/ when it is followed by a vowel as in 'love' /lʌv/; another one is called vague /ɫ/ either when it is followed by a consonant as in 'child' /tʃaild/ or when it is placed at the end of a word as in 'bell' /bel/. As seen in the table, only the clear /lᵊ/ can be paired with the Chinese sound /l/ as in 来 /lái/, because the Chinese language does not possess consonant syllabic structure (a mere consonant is not meaningful); its syllabic structure is either a vowel or a consonant plus a vowel. Hence it is quite difficult for Chinese students to pronounce the vague /ɫ/ correctly. It has been found that they either mute it or introduce a central vowel /ə/ to form another syllable with it or roll their tongue too much. Attention needs to be paid to this half consonant, the vague /ɫ/.

The English consonants which have been left unpaired; i.e. which do not have equivalent Chinese consonants are /ʃ/, /z/, /θ/, /ð/, /ŋ/, /v/, /r/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /tr/, and /dr/.

The consonants /ʃ/, /z/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /tr/, /dr/ and /r/ fortunately do not cause much difficulty, as Chinese has a corresponding voiceless sound /s/ of /z/ and a corresponding voiced sound /ʒ/ of /ʃ/ (see the first table). Only one phenomenon about the apical-fricative /r/ and the affricate /tʃ/ needs to be noticed: some students, especially those from south-west China, roll their tongue too much while pronouncing in their own language or dialect the blade-fricative voiced consonant /r/ which pairs with the English /ʒ/. My observations of students show that this excessive rolling of their tongue will be improved progressively by the students themselves, sometimes even without their awareness of it, as long as they become aware of the difference between these two English and Chinese sounds and as they speak English more fluently.

Chinese students often find difficulty in pronouncing the consonants /ʒ/ and /v/. Some learners cannot even do it for quite a long time, as these two sounds are totally new to them. For those who are able to pronounce them, it is very hard to distinguish between /n/ and /ŋ/, /w/ and /v/; at least it takes time to adapt themselves to it. Hence English words such as 'sin' and 'sing', 'ton' and 'tongue' are easily confused, while 'vest' can be pronounced 'west' and 'veil' for 'whale'. More attention needs to be paid to the English consonant /v/. The Chinese language has a great number of words having the sound /w/, which pairs with the English semivowel /w/ (see the table for vowels). But in some Chinese dialects, the sound /v/ that is not acceptable to the standard Chinese putonghua, has taken the place of /w/. Let's take 外 /wài/ and 万 /wàn/ as examples. Many Chinese dialect speakers pronounce these two words like /vài/ and /vàn/ instead of /wài/ and /wàn/. In China, putonghua is so unpopular that quite a number of students only learn it at the same time as they learn English. They must pronounce /v/ and make a hard-fast distinction between /v/ and /w/ when they speak English on the one hand, and avoid /v/ and replace it by /w/ when they speak putonghua on the other hand. This will take them time to get accustomed to. It has been observed that they manage it very well as soon as they become familiar with this labiodental fricative English sound and its pronunciation. The sound /v/ is much easier to pronounce than the sound /ŋ/ for Chinese students.

The English sounds /ð/ and /θ/ as in 'this thing' do not occur in the Chinese language. For the majority of Chinese students, /ð/ is very likely to become /z/, and /θ/ to become /s/. I found that although it is not very difficult for them to drill these two individual sounds in isolation, the difficulty remains in reading words and sentences with these two sounds, particularly in distinguishing between them and /s/, /z/ when they speak English. To master the two consonants requires both repeated practice and hard work for the Chinese students and painstaking work and patience from Chinese teachers of English.

It is not only the individual phonemes that cause difficulty for Chinese students, but also the way the sounds are distributed in English. This is especially true of consonant clusters, as in 'punched' /tʃt/ and 'screwdriver' /skr/. Chinese has a much simpler syllabic structure, which is V or CV (V=vowel, C=consonant), whereas the English distribution of sounds is much more complicated, and includes V, CV, VCV, CVC and CVCC. Thus when two or three English consonants are clustered together, many Chinese students tend to introduce a vowel between them, thereby following more closely the syllabic structure of their own language. This is due to their rooted-habit of using a one consonant-one vowel structure which forms meaningful sounds in their mother-tongue.

In addition, some Chinese students add a central vowel /ə/ to the final consonant sound as in 'rope', 'league'. They read them like /rəupə/ and /li:gə/ rather than /rəup/ and /li:g/, to make the final consonants /p/ and /g/ heard.

Important distinctions of grammar and meaning are often made in English by means of final consonant sounds or consonant clusters as in 'walk', 'walks', 'walked'. Because of ignorance of this fact and inability to discriminate between sounds, Chinese students often make mistakes either in spoken or in written English work, such as 'I walk (instead of walked) to school yesterday' or 'She like (instead of likes) to buy a lot of book (instead of books)'. Mistakes of this sort are not spelling mistakes, but are just as likely to be pronunciation mistakes.

The following groups of vowel sounds are those in which one English vowel pairs with one Chinese vowel, or more exactly its nearest equivalent Chinese vowel sound. The English vowel sounds give Chinese students as much trouble as the English consonants.

English V	Word Example	=	Chinese V	Word Example
/i:/	deep		/i/	dì 帝
/a:/	art		/a/	dà 大
/ɔ:/	law		/o/	bó 伯
/u:/	blue		/u/	gú 骨
/ə:/	bird		/e/	hé 河
/ai/	five		/ai/	kāi 开
/ei/	date		/ei/	fèi 废
/au/	how		/ao/	pǎo 跑
/əu/	note		/ou/	ròu 肉
/w/	week		/w/	wèi 为
/j/	yes		/y/	yāo 腰

Out of twenty-two English vowels, only eleven can be paired; the other half are left unpaired, which are /i/, /ʌ/, /c/, /u/, /ə/, /iə/, /ɛə/, /uə/, /ɔi/, /e/ and /æ/.

Among those unpaired sounds, /i/, /ʌ/, /ɔ/, /u/ and /ə/ cause characteristic problems for Chinese students. Although Chinese has many more vowels than English (35 vowels in Chinese, 22 in English), it contains no long/short vowel contrasts, as in 'sheep/ship', 'shot/shoot', 'past/just', 'full/fool', and 'first/river'. Chinese students usually apply the long /i:/, /ɔ:/. /a:/ /u:/, and /ə:/ to both cases. Some of them may find these distinctions so difficult that these problems must be given systematic attention in class.

The diphthong sounds /iə/, /ɛə/, /uə/ and /ɔi/ are quite easy to learn as individual phonemes for Chinese students. But if one listens carefully to them, the beginners in particular, one will agree that they either unconsciously reduce the diphthongs to single vowel sounds, or consciously stress the second vowel, or treat these two diphthong-forming vowels equally. For example, Chinese students might pronounce 'snake' as /snek/ instead of /sneik/, while some of them say 'clear' as /klijiə/ instead of /kliə/. This results from the students' ignorance of the special English pronunciation approach to its diphthong sounds; i.e. long, strong and clear for the first vowel, while short, soft and vague for the second one.

The vowels /e/ as in 'bed', and /æ/ as in 'jam' also present considerable difficulty for some Chinese students, as these two vowels are completely new to them. Some of them tend to pronounce 'bed' as /bə:d/ instead of /bed/, 'jam' as /ja:m/ instead of /jæm/, thus the English words such as 'bed' and 'bird' become confused.

I have tried to show in this paper that the sounds of the mother tongue have a considerable effect on the way Chinese students speak English by comparing the sound systems of English and Chinese. Another source of interference, known as spelling pronunciation (Tiffen & Williams, 1969: 26), which we can not afford to neglect, lies in the irregularity of English spelling, particularly the spelling of English vowels. This irregularity of spelling leads a lot of Chinese learners of English to pronounce incorrectly some English words. They pronounce them just as they are spelt. For instance, consider the sounds represented by the letter 'a' in the following words: father /a:/, fall /ɔ:/ any /e/, face /ei/, fat /æ/. Again, the same sound may be represented in spelling in many different ways. Thus the phoneme /i:/ may be represented as follows: be, tree, leaf, piece, seize, key, machine, people. The difficulty with the irregularity of English spelling on pronunciation is overcome or at last reduced naturally when students have acquired some English vocabulary and know English phonetic symbols, so they can get help from their dictionaries if necessary.

My students are from all parts of China. Their deep-rooted habits have been formed in the secondary schools where insufficient attention is paid to pronunciation teaching and very often their habits of English pronunciation have dialect interference. So they need remedial work on English pronunciation in the same way that they need remedial work on English grammar or structures. Their problems of pronunciation should be tackled in a systematic way. Otherwise, many students will leave university speaking a type of English that is difficult for others to understand.

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Two Tasks of Sense-Relation Based Vocabulary Teaching

Tian Hailong

English words are many but they do not appear in the English language at random. They are semantically associated and "...are arranged in a series of associative networks" (Gairns and Redman, 1986: 88). Linguists have already identified some types of these sense relationships; for example, the relationships of synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy. The conceptual relation between synonyms may be seen in the following group of words: cup, mug, glass.

Though each of them represents a different type of drinking vessel, the three words are related to each other in that they all refer to drinking vessels. In other words, they are in the same semantic field, or, sense relationships exist between them.

The above can readily lead to the belief that "the meaning of a word can only be understood and learnt in terms of its relationship with other words in the language" (Gairns and Redman, 1986: 22). By saying this, Gairns and Redman are emphasizing the importance of learning vocabulary through sense relationships. This sense-relationship based vocabulary learning is more efficient than rote learning in terms of memorization. However, in my experience teaching English, to teach vocabulary through sense relations will be even more efficient if it is integrated into a communicative task, which is, according to Nunan,"...a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than on form" (Nunan, 1989: 10).

Nunan's definition takes the learner's involvement in language activities as a major feature of the communicative task. It is in this sense that Gairns and Redman call a "meaningful task" (1986: 90) a kind of communicative task. However, a meaningful task can be more "meaningful" when it is associated with sense relationship based vocabulary teaching. This integration, which I label as a sense-relationship based task, provides the learners access to a deeper analysis of the language by involving them in predicting the meaning of new words through group or pair work with context as clues. It also makes the understanding of word meaning fun and helps learners commit information to long term memory. In participating in these tasks the learners, while reading, are trained to rely on their own efforts to deduce word meaning rather than frequently using the dictionary.

Two Sense-Relationship Based Tasks

I have designed two sense-relationship based tasks of teaching new words and have recently successfully used them in my class of twenty-five Chinese college English students whose English level had passed the intermediate stage. The two tasks are concerned with synonymy, but the principle is applicable to the teaching of new words in other types of sense relationships.

Task one

Photocopy or make an overhead projection of a paragraph or paragraphs from a passage of text. Cover some of the new words so that the students have a cloze text. Ask the students to discuss in groups or pairs what the missing words are. The students should be able to find the semantic field although they may not find the exact same word as the original one. The teacher then writes the new word or words on the board together with those suggested by the students. The words form a group(s); the teacher may then either explain their conceptual boundaries or ask the students to discuss the boundaries.

Task two

After the presentation of the paragraph, or the whole text, the teacher may give the students some words, and ask them to find their synonyms in the text. This may be done in groups. When each group works out a set of synonyms, the teacher organizes a classroom discussion, in which each group adds to the list of synonyms for each of the given words.

Conclusion

In the Chinese classroom, the teacher has traditionally taught new words by letting students read through a list. The students may read after the teacher in chorus, or they read aloud one after another in class, occasionally interrupted by the teacher's grammatical explanations.

Entirely different from this are the tasks of sense-relationship based teaching of new words. These tasks are communicative in nature; they turn the class from the monologue of the teacher to a student-centred seminar. Among many other advantages common to all communicative tasks, the following two are emphasized:

1. Since students are active participants whose interest is wholly engaged in the task, they are highly motivated in trying to find the meaning of the new words. Such an endeavour ensures them a deeper processing of the language and makes for long term memory of the new words.
2. Compared with the traditional way of teaching new words, which focuses on rote memorization, the sense-relationship based tasks are efficient for helping students overcome cue dependant forgetfulness. That is, tasks of this kind make it easier for students to recall the words when needed. The reason for this is that their access to the new words through sense relationships makes it possible for semantically related new words to be "stored together" in their minds.

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Some Aspects in Vocabulary Teaching

Jing Youcheng

To a Chinese student, learning English is basically a matter of learning English vocabulary. Not being able to find the words he needs to express himself is the most frustrating experience in his learning process. Of course, vocabulary is by no means the only essential part in the English language. As Edward Sapir points out, "The linguistic students should never make the mistake of identifying a language with its dictionary" (Sapir, 1921: 234). However, it is believed by both English students and teachers that vocabulary is a vital aspect of the language and the mastery of vocabulary is a slow and demanding task. Not only are there new words to learn, but also the ways and situations in which they are used. How to teach vocabulary effectively has always been a primary concern of all EFL teachers.

A text with too many new words is unreadable and incomprehensible to students. Difficult texts can be toiled painfully through with innumerable explanations by the teacher, but the process is dreary and fruitless. So, many linguists claim that the first and foremost task of an EFL teacher is "vocabulary selection and control" (Bright and McGregor, 1977: 15). Teachers should not leave vocabulary to look after itself. Most Chinese EFL teachers are not course book writers. They usually try their best to choose the appropriate text books from what is available in the bookshop although there are not many choices. Once a textbook is decided on they will set out to select the suitable vocabulary items to introduce to their students.

Classification of Vocabulary

From the students' point of view, vocabulary can be divided into two groups:

1. Known vocabulary:

   Students are familiar with the meanings and uses of the words in this group. In the classroom, the teacher will check that the students remember these words. The students can be called upon to describe these words and to make sentences with them.
2. Unknown vocabulary:

   The words in this group are new to students. The teacher will explain in passing those words which are not essential to comprehension but will focus on those words which are essential to comprehension. Much of the class time should be devoted to teaching those words.

From the teacher's point of view vocabulary can also be divided into two groups:

1. Content words:

   Content words constitute the bulk of English vocabulary. This is the material usually considered when English vocabulary is discussed. According to Charles C. Fries, these are words that function as symbols for "things", for "actions" and for "qualities", namely, nouns, verbs and adjectives (Fries, 1978: 46). Vocabulary teaching should be concentrated on these content words.
2. Function words:

   Function words, including auxiliaries, prepositions, conjunctions, articles, etc., primarily or largely operate as means of expressing relations of grammatical structure. They are almost empty of meaning when considered in isolation. These words should be taught in relation with content words.

As Mina P. Shaughnessy vividly puts it, "some words are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested" (Shaughnessy, 1977: 218). This should be a very good help to EFL teachers in their different treatments of words when teaching vocabulary.

Some Aspects in Vocabulary Teaching

1. Spelling

   English spelling is tricky and full of pitfalls for foreign students. Chinese students invariably find spelling a headache in their English study. So, many Chinese EFL teachers tend to overemphasize the importance of spelling. This practice should not be encouraged as it will divert the students' attention from other and more important aspects of vocabulary learning.

2. Pronunciation

   The teacher will make sure that his students can pronounce the new words correctly, for correct pronunciation usually makes the spelling a less formidable task. It is also advisable for the teacher to introduce to the students rules in pronunciation so that they feel more confident because they have something to fall back on.

3. Meaning

   There are different approaches to teaching the meaning of a new word. The simplest one is the use of translation. All English expressions are immediately translated into Chinese, and new words are usually recorded in the students' vocabulary notebooks. As a result, English is little used in English lessons-most of the time is taken up with Chinese. The students have very few opportunities to practice using the English vocabulary in conversation, or even in writing, and hardly ever get to the point of thinking in English. Use of Chinese, especially with those content words for "things", can save a lot of time. However, I agree with Michael Wallace that translation of vocabulary into the mother tongue should be kept under tight control (Wallace, 1982: 48).

   A better approach is to explain a word by using a simple explanation in English. It is preferable to use in the explanation words or phrases the students are acquainted with. In this way, the students not only learn new words but also review the words they have learned before. On a future occasion when the students cannot think of the best word in a particular situation, they will often have a synonym or an alternative phrasing ready at hand. This technique gives the students extra exposure to the language they are learning.

   In dealing with the meaning of a new word, context is of fundamental importance and should constantly be stressed. Charles Fries points out that context controls the meaning and suggests teaching vocabulary items always in the context (Fries, 1978: 54). Instead of just telling the students the meanings of new words, the teacher is to describe the various situations in which the words are used. This is done by providing a variety of contexts for the same words or vocabulary items-enough so that the distinctive features of the various situations become clear to the students. For the word 'rise', for example, there could be contexts as follows:

   * Yesterday the temperature was 20°C. Today it is 30°C. The temperature has risen ten degrees since yesterday.
   * Everyday he gets up before the sun rises.
   * After the heavy rain the river is rising.
   * The price of cotton has risen by 10%.
   * Her voice rose higher and higher with excitement.
   * New factories have risen on the edge of the town.
   * It was about dinner time. Smoke rose from the cottage chimneys.

   Therefore, vocabulary work should not be set aside as a separate section of the lesson plan. A lot of new words and phrases will be taught as they arise naturally out of the discussion of the meaning of the text. This usually makes lessons livelier and more interesting.

Vocabulary Development

To expand the students' vocabulary is another aim in vocabulary teaching. The teacher should be on the look-out for opportunities to do this without causing the students to be overwhelmed and frustrated by the quantity of new words. The introduction of word formation, synonyms and antonyms and collocation can be an effective aid to vocabulary development.

1. Word formation

Students are often intimidated by long new words they encounter in the text they are learning. To show the students that these words can be broken down into small units made up of stems and affixes will not only increase their control over words but also make memorization easier for them. Teachers usually depend on affixes that carry information to help the students deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words.

a. Prefixes indicating number:
bi-: bicycle, bicentenary, bilateral
tri-: tricycle, triangle, trilogy
multi-: multiple, multistorey, multimillionaire
mono-: monologue, monopoly, monotone
poly-: polyatomic, polytechnic, polysyllable

b. Prefixes indicating smallness:
mini-: miniskirt, minibus, miniature
micro-: microscope, microfilm, microwave

c. Prefixes suggesting negation:
dis-: dislike, disagree, disappear
mis-: misspell, mistrust, misuse
counter-: counterattack, counteract, countermeasure
mal-: maltreatment, malnutrition, maladministration
anti-: antislavery, anticlimax, anticlockwise
non-: nonalignment, nonintervention, nonconformity
in-: inconvenience, incomplete, incorrect
un-: uninteresting, unimportant, unnecesseray

d. Suffixes signalling a noun:
-tion: revolution, expression, attraction
-ment: disappointment, excitement, astonishment
-ness: kindness, happiness, carelessness
-ship: friendship, relationship, championship
-dom: freedom, kingdom, boredom
-er & -or: driver, writer, sailor
-ance & -ence: assistance, dependence, persistence
-age: postage, passage, percentage

e. Suffixes signalling an adjective:
-able: movable, lovable, changeable
-ive: expressive, attractive, impressive
-al: external, internal, additional
-ful: hopeful, useful, helpful
-less: homeless, penniless, careless
-ic: classic, poetic, historic

f. Suffixes signalling a verb:
-en: shorten, widen, broaden
-ize: criticize, industrialize, popularize

-fy: purify, signify, identify

f. Suffix signalling an adverb:

-ly: quickly, obviously, clearly

2. Synonyms and antonyms

New words are often acquired through the use of synonyms and antonyms. However, synonyms may be misleading because words which are generally thought to be synonyms may be quite different with respect to a different aspect of their meaning, the contexts in which they may be used, or the words that they collocate with. An obvious example of words which are synonyms in many contexts is 'big' and 'large'. We can either say 'I need a big box'' or ''I need a large box'', but 'big' can be used in contexts like, ''What a big boy you are !'' where 'large' would sound quite inappropriate. Some words have two different synonyms or antonyms depending on which meaning of the original word is selected. The opposite of 'old' can be 'new' or 'young'. Other commonly-occurring antonyms of this kind are: light-dark/heavy; hard-soft/easy; dull-bright/sharp. Therefore, great care must be taken in presenting synonyms and antonyms.

3. Collocation

What linguists refer to as collocation is the way that words normally occur together. There are different kinds of collocations; namely, noun+noun, noun+verb, adjective+noun, verb+adverb, and verb+preposition. The easiest way for students to learn normal collocations is for them to be presented in stituations that are clearly defined. Let us take just one of these combinations as an example: verb+noun.

* He bought some boards in order to make a bookcase.
* The students had to make their own beds each day.
* He worked late in his study because he had to make an important speech in the House the next day.
* The children are making a lot of noise.
* He makes a lot of money in his job.

The acquisition of vocabulary is an integral part of learning a foreign language. It is not advisable for language teachers either to overemphasize the learning of words to the exclusion of other parts of the language system, or to overlook the importance of the lexical system by overemphasizing grammatical and sound systems. Vocabulary growth is always a slow process, which requires persistent painstaking efforts on the part of the teachers as well as the students.

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An Approach to Classroom Video

Xu Wei

The Background of Chinese Non-English Major Students

Today the traditional grammar-translation teaching method is still widely used throughout China, especially for non-English majors who are required to read faster, translate better, and be able to write easily.

Listening and speaking are seldom emphasized. Due to the lack of strict training in listening and speaking in English, students can not respond immediately and can only understand a few words of what others say.

According to Ruby Wang (1982: 6), "50% of the Chinese scholars and 60% of the overseas students who go to America to study cannot understand the teachers whose class they attend, and what is more, they are unable to participate in class discussion. They are forced to enroll in remedial English courses and this is a heavy burden upon them."

Among language skills, listening and speaking training seem more appropriate for those students in English Language Centers. After graduation, they can participate in discussion and attend conferences in English-speaking countries.

The Purpose of Using Video Film in Teaching English

1) "There is no one set of ideal teaching materials, so there is no universal teaching method suited to the many contexts of language learning...teachers should see the learner as a physical, psychological and intellectual being with needs and interests that extend far beyond those of the language classroom." (Savignon, 1983: 187) Teaching speaking and listening skills by using video films can help students develop their listening and speaking abilities. "If teachers only put students into lecture situations which neglect communicative competence, the effort is doomed to fail." (Savignon, 1983: Preface) In order to create a real-life English situation, teachers in our English Centre provide mostly 15 minute short video tapes produced by the Agency For Instructional Television, U.S.A. Most of them are daily life stories. The content is Finding Jobs; High School Students' Conflicts; Life on a Farm; Family Life Between Parents and Children.

Our students are mainly graduate students with advanced English levels who are majoring in the Social Sciences. The average of their TOEFL Score is 300-400.

2) "Gestures, distance, posture, a facial expression communicate meaning along with the words we speak." (Savignon, 1983: 43) "There is a gesture code just as there is a linguistic code. There are sociolinguistic rules governing gestures, and there are sociolinguistic rules governing speech." (Hilgard & Bawer, 1987: 607) In real life, people understand each other not only by listening to what people say, but also by each other's gestures and posture as well as facial expression. Video film teaching provides our students with these elements of the gesture code. They use their eyes and ears to understand linguistic and cultural codes when they watch the movies; they use gestures, posture and facial expressions in role-playing exercises. Also various written exercises are created by both American teachers and Chinese teachers in our Centre. The purpose of doing exercises is that students can enlarge their vocabulary and learn phrases. They can get the main idea not only by watching movies but from doing various exercises. All initiatives (ears, eyes, brain, hands) are brought into play.

3) Students get to know the different accents and rhythms of speech such as those of Southerners, Northerners, the old, the young, and American blacks.

One of the reasons that Chinese students do not understand what people say when they are abroad is that often they only listen to BBC or VOA standard English when they learn English in China. Moreover, teachers at school only teach students standard English. They seldom have a chance to hear different accents, but videos in the classroom give them more access to natural spoken English.

The Procedure in Teaching Video Film

1) Before viewing the video, vocabulary from the film is listed and the meaning given. Students may be asked some of the meanings of words beforehand. This increases their vocabulary and helps them to understand the content of the video.
2) The teacher gives a general idea of the plot of the film which can aid the students in understanding its content.
3) Students are asked to read questions on the handouts which they will be asked after the first viewing. Students must pay attention to the answers when they watch the video.
4) The teacher plays the video tape through once, to help familiarize students with the content of the film and the role of each character. After watching the video, the students can only understand the general idea of the story, but they are then divided into several groups to discuss its elements in more detail. The teacher will join their discussion and help students to understand the film. The discussion provides students opportunity for oral practice in class. It stimulates their interest. Even if some students may not understand what the characters say in the film, they can guess the meaning by watching the actions of the characters. After a 10 minute discussion, the teacher will check the comprehension of the film by going over the discussion questions in class and eliciting answers from individual students.
5) The video is played a second time for students to do fill-in-the-blank exercises, replaying appropriate sections several times, and stopping as needed. Major points of dialogue and typical aspects of American culture are pointed out and explained.
   By the time they finish watching the video the second time, students already understand the story fully and almost all the words in appropriate sections.
6) The third viewing is the last one. The teacher will replay the entire video. Students will complete listening sequence exercises, multiple choice exercises, and sometimes true/false exercises.
7) After viewing a video film three times and having done their various exercises, students have a deep impression of the film. After-class preparation is needed for the following week's video-listening class. They are divided into several groups again for role-play with each member of a group playing a character who appeared in the film. For the next week's class, they create their own lines to retell the content of the film, with only five to ten minute presentations permitted in class. Sometimes, their task is to retell the film instead of role-play.

Advantages

Language is active in nature. The non-English major students usually say: "We learn what we want to learn". They do not want to learn the language itself in isolation from specific content. They want to communicate with people about economics, politics, and the social sciences. On the whole, they want to promote their communicative competence. From films, one can learn more communicative competence which is an interpersonal rather than an intrapersonal trait. Setting up interpersonal situations through videos leads students to speak English and think in English.

"Students are the active watchers and listeners instead of passive ones. The Stimulus-Response theory pays attention to the response of the students." (Hilgard & Bawer, 1987: 609)

The Stimulus-Response theory shows that the more stimulus the brain accepts, the more response the brain can produce. When the language blends into the film to stimulate watchers' brains, the watchers accept language, not the language itself, but the language through stimulus. The classroom is not classroom anymore; it becomes a social setting. The watchers will respond in the social setting after they have the stimulus from the film. We let students listen to real daily-life English at a natural pace. They use the language right after they learn it. "A theory of communicative competence rests, then, on a broad perspective of all culture as communication or meaning, on the one hand, and the description of the patterned relationship of social role and social setting to linguistic expression, on the other." (Savignon, 1983: 14) Video-Listening teaching is happening in the classroom in our Centre. But its activities lead students out of the classroom. Students are involved in the patterned relationship of social role. "Along with words we learn to use intonation, gestures, facial expression and many other features of communication to convey our meaning to persons around us." (Savignon, 1983: 4) After viewing the film, "most of our repertoire of communication strategies develops unconsciously, through assimilation of role models". (Savignon, 1983: 4) Formal training in the classroom only affords lectures which are very static, but classroom videos prepare students for dynamic interpersonal communication.

From the films, one can hear various kinds of accent and intonation. so the students can understand the different accents. They are not limited to understanding only BBC or VOA standard English.

This video-teaching method arouses interest. The atmosphere is very active, which is quite different from teaching in the traditional classroom. Prompted by the various exercises to be done and questions to be answered, students absorb the language in a relaxed situation. The most effective aspect of the classroom video approach is that the learner is involved in the experience of language as a network of relations between people, things, and events. It is easier to learn a language in a real life situation rather than in an artificial classroom situation.

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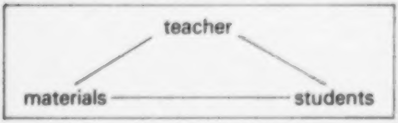
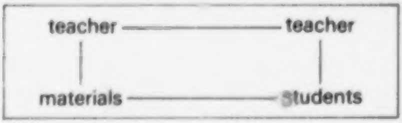
Teaming Up: Team Teaching in English for Specific Purposes

Ann Smith

Most definitions of teaching English for specific purposes (ESP) state that the teacher combines the usual functions of an English as a second or foreign language teacher with some additional duties. "It is likely that in addition to the normal functions of a classroom teacher, the ESP teacher will have to deal with needs analysis, syllabus design, materials writing or adaptation and evaluation" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987: 157). This definition is unfortunately rather too narrow as it neglects to mention the need to be able to team teach.

It has become quite common for an ESP teacher to team teach. The team may combine an ESP teacher with a specialist professor in biology, business or social work to teach in an ESP course. In China, however, the team is more likely to be two ESP teachers who exchange skills and knowledge of language teaching. Both team types can result in a variety of approaches being used.





Team teaching changes the normal classroom interaction triangle of the teacher, materials and students into a square as two teachers become involved. Three distinct approaches to team teaching can be found depending chiefly on the level of involvement and cooperation between teachers.

1. The most integrated approach to team teaching involves joint course planning, joint classroom teaching and critique discussions.
2. A second approach involves joint planning followed by the teaching of separate classes or alternate teaching by hour or week of the same class.
3. Thirdly, team teaching can involve minimal joint planning followed by the teaching of separate classes, such as those given prior to specialized training or parallel to the training.

Professor and ESP Teacher Team Up

When a specialist professor is teamed up with an ESP teacher, the teacher is responsible for the language teaching and the professor is responsible for the subject matter. In order to illustrate how different team teaching approaches can work, this paper analyzes the team arrangements used in the Bachelor of Social Work degree programme for Micmac Indian social service personnel at Dalhousie University in Canada. The programme provided training in both social work and English language skills. Course modifications were made to accommodate the students' language needs as their academic backgrounds varied widely. Care was taken not to dilute the quality of the degree in any way, so extra teaching hours were added. The ESP teacher was brought in to ensure students could cope with specialized vocabulary, assignments such as essays, reports, or exams and presentations and would gain an overall understanding of the course content.

In the Canadian experience, the most rewarding team teaching approach for students and teachers was the first, more integrated and cooperative arrangement. It produced a contact-centred course that provided specific subject matter designed to meet the students' needs, backgrounds and interests in the subject area. In what students deemed the most successful case, the professor and the ESP teacher worked closely together to plan the first course. The

Introduction to Social Work, a 90 hour course, had to take into consideration the student needs as adult English as a second language learners who had very varied educational backgrounds and extensive work experience. Materials were jointly selected, cultural concerns were identified, assignments were modified, lessons were planned together and the ESP was inserted at the appropriate moment. The joint management of this course involved teaching in the same classroom at the same time. The professor limited her lectures to approximately one hour and more communicative group discussion activities were inserted and taught jointly. This was supplemented by individual or small group ESP coaching for the weaker students.

Other courses in the programme followed the second somewhat less integrated approach. This was preferred by some professors who cooperated in joint planning but assigned a period of time during the class to a separate ESP course covering reading, writing, listening and speaking which ran parallel to the subject course. The ESP teacher attended the subject classes (or occasionally taped them) to ensure knowledge of the subject area and its vocabulary and was occasionally called on during class to explain or paraphrase a point causing difficulty. This type of team teaching gave the professor and the teacher clearly defined separate spheres of influence.

Other professors preferred the third approach which involved little joint planning, mainly the passing of a course outline explaining the assignments and assigned readings. In this situation the ESP teacher held a separate class but was usually welcome to attend subject classes.

In only one case, a professor flatly refused to have anything to do with the ESP component of the degree which he said interfered with his academic freedom and meddled in his course. Kennedy explains: "...sometimes the subject specialist's suspicion of the ESP teacher is so great that cooperation proves impossible." (Kennedy, 1979: 44).

But Kennedy summarizes the advantages of team teaching briefly and clearly. There are a number of reasons why team teaching is a welcome innovation. It ensures more personal contact between students, subject specialist staff and language teachers. Problems can be discussed between all three parties involved and students can see that both subject and language teachers are working together with the common aim of helping him. The conceptual problems the language teacher may have when teaching the language can be eased by the subject teacher and conversely, the subject teacher may be made more aware of the language problems his own teaching presents the students with. There is the additional benefit that the language teacher does not have to intuitively choose 'authentic' texts for teaching, nor hypothesise about the probable problems of his students when confronted with subject specific texts. (Kennedy, 1980: 123)

Chinese and Canadian Colleagues Team Up

In China, the team is less likely to be a professor and an ESP teacher than to be two ESP teachers, one Chinese and one foreign expert. At the Canada/China Language Centre in Beijing, which provides ESP training to Chinese adult professionals who will go to Canada for a work and/or study project, Chinese and Canadian teachers team up in order to exchange and transfer teaching skills.

Team teaching began with a semester of observation when teachers visited each others' classes and watched what was happening. In the second semester, teams of one Chinese and one Canadian teacher shared responsibility for a course. It is this arrangement which will be the focus here.

The organization of the team arrangement was not prescribed and teachers were able to select schemes which seemed suitable for the skill area and the timetable. The first, most integrated approach, which had proved very popular with Micmac students in Canada, provided the model for team teaching a reading and a multiskills course, covering Canadian culture and study skills, at the Centre. The goal was for both teachers to become familiar with and use each others' materials and methods of teaching. This first model involved joint planning, joint teaching (with both teachers in the classroom at the same time), experimentation with each others' teaching methods and materials, observation, feedback and critique discussions.

The participants frequently agreed on the type of authentic materials or real communication activity to be used in the class. However, differences became evident when the teams discussed the methodology and its underlying theoretical basis. Debate ensued on how to modify methods or materials in order to obtain a productive team approach, maintain standards and fulfill course goals. Each tried out, or participated in, the other's methods and as a result considerably extended her repertoire of methods. For the Canadian teacher, some of these methods, which she had used earlier but discarded as the communicative approach became more popular, were reinstated.

Differences between Chinese and Canadian teaching styles became clearer as the semester progressed. Chinese teaching is much more teacher centred than Canadian teaching and follows a more structural approach. The teachers are expected to give students all the information leaving little else left for them to ask. The traditional expectation is that they should be well prepared so they can answer any question that may arise. Yen Ren Ting suggests that "teachers should be all-knowing and ever correct." (Yen, 1989: 53) Chinese students are generally more passive and work individually or in pairs doing exercises or drills. Hoa Xiao-jia et al describe them as "mechanical note-takers like solitary robots." (Hoa, 1990: 45) For example, pair work often involves only one pair demonstrating a dialogue while the other students listen and the teacher corrects every utterance. Group work is very seldom used. One Chinese teacher cites a proverb, saying "...we Chinese teachers lead the students to the well and force them to drink."

Canadian teaching is reflected in the contrasting English proverb: you can lead a horse to water but you cannot make him drink. Teaching is more student centred and follows a communicative approach. Teachers are expected to be well prepared with activities to facilitate the development of their students' language fluency through the use of real communication and authentic materials. Students are responsible for their own participation and learning and choose whether or not "to drink the water." They are encouraged to ask questions in order to gain information and knowledge and to discuss amongst themselves. In pair or group work, all students participate and try out their English; the teacher circulates and gives feedback.

In order to bridge the differences in teaching styles the teachers discussed the Canadian and Chinese methods and agreed to different approaches for activities. In reading class, communicative pre-reading activities which bring out the students' background knowledge of the topic were incorporated. Initially the Chinese teacher prefered to go round the class questioning individual students which gave more control over the topic and responses. The Canadian teacher prefered to have students volunteer information (volunteers identified themselves by eye contact) or work in small groups and report back orally through use of an overhead projector. By the end of the semester, after first observing and then experimenting, both teachers were using all methods and experimenting with others such as predicting from key vocabulary items.

In Multiskills class, both teachers gave a dictated prepositions exercise which instructed students to write and draw words and symbols on a page. The Canadian gave very little information and encouraged students to ask clarification questions such as "Did you say the top left hand corner?" or "How big is the triangle?" The Chinese teacher gave very detailed instructions accompanied by gestures and students listened quietly. Afterwards it was agreed that the Chinese teacher would give less information and encourage questions and the Canadian would assist the students more with clarification utterances before dictating.

Discussion frequently returned to two key topics: error correction and group work. Error correction in the communicative approach does not address every utterance and students are encouraged to practice using trial and error. Chinese teachers were uncomfortable when errors were not dealt with immediately. As a result teachers corrected pairs directly at the end of an utterance and in the large group gave indirect correction by repeating the utterance correctly in context. Group work is often unfamiliar to Chinese teachers, so initially the teachers observed. They then prepared and observed one group, and later participated in a group as the facilitator. Concerns about students' preference for the native speaker were addressed by having teachers circulate around the class in opposite directions to avoid visiting the same pair/group at the same time.

The Chinese teachers offered extensive knowledge of Chinese culture, education, teaching and learning styles as well as practical insights into the functioning of the typical Chinese classroom. The Canadian teacher offered knowledge of Canadian culture, the communicative approach, practical ESP experience and team teaching expertise. Students benefited from having two teachers in the class at the same time. They received more individual attention, a wider variety of teaching styles and activities, and questions on vocabulary and culture could always be answered by one teacher or the other. In the final course evaluation, students had no comment on the team teaching experiment. In Canadian interpretation no news is good news; however, in Chinese interpretation silence means disagreement so we will have to wait for future student comment.

Factors Influencing Team Teaching

Clearly there are many influences on team teaching in Canada and China. Here factors which influence the successful implementation of the first integrated and cooperative approach, and the other two approaches to a lesser extent, will be outlined.

Firstly, teachers need to be able and willing to cooperate in planning, jointly teaching and finally critiqueing the lesson. This requires trust and openness from teachers who must realise that the theory and methods they use are going to be quite different. Lin Yuyin reminds us: "Keep an open mind and try to understand that people are behaving according to their own cultural values which are born of a culture different from your own. What's more, avoid evaluating people's behaviour by the standards of your own country. Maintain your perspective..." (Lin, 1988: 16)

Equality, mutual respect and recognition of each others' abilities and areas of expertise are essential in the team relationship. In Beijing, the balance changed if a teacher entering the Centre was teamed with an "old hand" to promote knowledge of the curriculum and the Centre or if a recent graduate was teamed with an experienced teacher. In Canada one of the problems facing the ESP teacher as the only language teacher in a subject department was low status. However, in the professor/teacher relationship, as long as the professor showed an interest in and respect for the job of the ESP teacher, mutual cooperation could produce integrated courses. It is best to try to keep a professional relationship, but recognise that personality factors also play a part in the relationship.

Teachers also need to be secure enough to cope with the risks and surprises involved in exploring new methods, authentic materials and cross cultural communication as misunderstandings may occur. Some organizational problems may also arise. For example, once both ESP teachers prepared the same component of a lesson and no one prepared the second component. Another time neither had the photocopies; each thought the other teacher had them!

Along with great teaching successes, there may be occasional failures in the exploration of new methods and materials. Ability to cope with failure is especially important in China where saving face and being an expert is the cultural norm. In this situation it is important for teachers to understand why the failure occurred and what modifications need to be made before the activity is used again rather than discarding the material.

> One of the major barriers to implementation is that teachers are expected never to fail and, if they do, they are expected to deny and hide it because it is viewed competitively as something shameful and as proof that they are incompetent (or less competent than other teachers). (Johnson, Johnson and Johnson-Holubec, 1986: 90)

Teachers also need to recognise the value of observation-both as observer and the observed. Johnson, Johnson and Johnson-Holubec have made some useful suggestions about observation adapted and listed below:

1. Be prepared to respect and learn from your peer regardless of her experience and personal characteristics.
2. Make sure observation and feedback goes both ways.
3. Sometimes ask the teacher being observed what she would like you to focus your attention on.
4. Focus feedback and comments on the lesson not an personal competence.
5. In your feedback note strengths and weaknesses and give practical alternatives.
6. Respect a refusal to try a new method and delay the activity.
7. Remember no one is perfect!

(Adapted from Johnson, Johnson and Johnson-Holubec, 1986: 95-96)

Often teachers must remind themselves that they are experts in language teaching but not in all subject areas. In fact, when teaching ESP to adults, the students are generally much more familiar with the specialized subject matter than the ESP teacher, so teachers can make use of them as resource people. For example, a medical question can be redirected to a doctor, or a pollution question to an environmental specialist. Other questions can be redirected back to the class in general.

Finally, scheduling certainly influences team teaching. Teachers need to have not only time to be together in class but they also need time for productive joint planning and productive discussions. This involves good organization and preplanning ahead of the course and each lesson as fruitless meetings soon breed discontent. At the Centre in Beijing, this involved one formal, one hour planning session and up to two more hours a week of informal office discussion for four teaching hours.

Conclusion

Team teaching has the possibility of providing a rewarding exchange of skills and growth of knowledge for the ESP teacher, especially when a teacher is entering a new programme or course, meeting a new curriculum or a new methodology. Of the several approaches to team teaching outlined here, the first most integrated approach appears to be the most productive for both teachers and students. It allows the team to work cooperatively and share planning, observation, teaching and a great deal of critical debate.

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Many thanks to Niu Hongyin and Jia Zhimei for their helpful comments on earlier drafts.

Learning a Second Language: Beijing Diary

Bob Courchêne

ENTRY 1

As I had lost my deodorant to the sharp-eyed airport security in Hong Kong enroute to Beijing, I decided shortly after my arrival that a visit to the local department store was in order. Operating on the North American assumption that everything in the store would be packaged and labelled in a distinctive manner according to product, I anticipated no difficulty in simply being able to go into the store and point to what I wanted. When I arrived at the store, I headed for the counter that looked like it might have what I wanted. Even though I later found out that my intuition was right, surprise rather than success awaited. I discovered to my chagrin that almost all products were packaged in green and white boxes and that these boxes only bore labels in Chinese characters or pinyin. The clerk looked at me and said what I can only imagine was something like, "Can I help you?" I smiled, she smiled, I smiled, she smiled and I left. Lesson one of my Chinese instruction.

As I headed out of the store empty handed, I was suddenly struck by how much I had been taking for granted as an L2 teacher. I had forgotten how difficult it was to begin a new language from zero. When I set out to learn French, I already possessed a passive vocabulary consisting of the nearly 20,000 words English and French have in common. As well, since both languages used Roman script, no new learning was required in that area either; I could immediately use the written word as support for my language learning (I am a highly visual learner, as are nearly one-third of our L2 students). As I continued my walk down the street trying to politely acknowledge the stares of the curious passers by, I realized that I would have to crack two codes to get access to the language, the culture and the people-the written and the oral.

In my 25 years as a language teacher, I have certainly been aware that students who speak and write a language that does not use a Roman script have certain difficulties adapting to our writing system, but the full impact of the challenge did not really come home to me until that first day in Beijing. The more I thought about it, the more I realized that most of the strategies I had used in the past to learn L2's would probably be ineffective in this context. In addition, I realized that the rich cultural baggage that had been so useful in learning French (despite our linguistic differences, we share many content and formal schema) would not help me here in China.

ENTRY 2

Not one to be easily discouraged by failure, I decided to try my luck in another store. Before entering, I had decided to opt for gestures rather than the spoken word to obtain my much needed deodorant. Smile in hand, I approached a promising looking counter and began to make charade-like gestures indicating what I would like. After a few seconds, the clerk reached for a litre-sized bottle and politely handed it to me. Encouraged by the success of my actions, I placed my money on the counter and was pleasantly surprised when she only took ¥ 5.5 (about 1.20$). I said to myself, "If only it were this reasonable in Canada". When I finally inspected the bottle outside, I realized that what I had bought was not deodorant but some form of cologne or body rub. I was surprised for I thought that my gestures had been very clear. How could she have not understood me? I later found out that in most Chinese stores you cannot buy deodorant as the Chinese do not use it.

The difference in gestures came home to me shortly after my arrival at the CCLC when I was called on to tell one of our best teachers that she had to return to her department. When she began to cry, I reached out to comfort her but soon realized that while my gesture of sympathy was certainly appreciated, my manner of expressing it was highly inappropriate in the Chinese context.

ENTRY 3

Before coming to China, I had purchased a couple of language tapes and had spent many hours trying to understand and imitate the sentences on tape. Everyday as I travelled from home to school, I played the tapes over and over again. Eager to test my knowledge, I went to the local market and pointed at different vegetables that I wanted to buy. When I finished, the local merchant looked at me and said, "Qi kuai, yi mao". I didn't understand a word and yet at home I had spent a long time working on my numbers. Unfortunately, no one had told me that in Beijing, "yuan" and "jiao" are what is printed on bank notes but the local people use "kuai" and "mao". The language of the formal classroom bore no resemblance to the language in the street. I wondered how many times I had been guilty of the same error-teaching what was right rather than what was used, insisting on correct usage rather than current use.

ENTRY 4

Upon arriving in China I was told that the Canadian Local Support Unit would arrange for Chinese lessons for me if I wanted them. Traumatized by my first experiences, I decided that this would be an excellent way of gaining access to the language and the culture. To my great surprise, my language teacher did not speak a word of English. He was very cultured, a highly regarded expert in his field, the author of several textbooks and reports but without any English. In addition, he brought with him his own method of teaching Chinese-the nerve of him! Why did he not consult me ahead of time? Our first lessons were very tense. All he wanted me to do was repeat. I wanted a meaning-based approach to language learning. I remember one day he asked me to repeat a sentence 26 times. After the 26th time, I gave him the hand-over-the-head I-have-had-it sign. He did not understand. He said something about "Cha"(tea).

Then I gave him the hand-across-the-throat sign and threw my book on the desk. He picked up his dictionary and showed me the word for "tired". I said no and showed him the word for "frustrated". He did not understand. How could I not appreciate his teaching methods? Who was I to question how he should teach? We have since worked out a more comfortable teaching/learning method but it made me question the certitude with which I impose my teaching/learning method on my students. How many times have I gone into the classroom and started to use a methodology completely foreign to my students without giving them any preparation at all?

ENTRY 5

Convinced that meaning-based approaches to language learning are the best, I decided to take a tai-chi (Chinese shadow boxing) lesson as a source of comprehensible input (a type of total physical response). My tai-chi teacher speaks almost no English so all explanations are given in Chinese. At the beginning of each class, we try to have a short conversation in Chinese. As I do my lesson each morning, I see large numbers of Chinese students who rise early to recite their text books to memorize their lessons. My theoretical background says, "That's not the way to learn a second language" but when I meet and interact with these students, the products of this approach to L2 learning, I realize that they must be doing something right. Many of the most proficient Chinese speakers that I know have never left the country, and possibly have never had a foreign teacher. I am still taking my tai-chi lessons and struggling to make sense of what my teacher says but I have made little progress. I probably started to take them before having any type of knowledge base that would make them the least bit comprehensible. In the process, however, I have learned respect for ways of L2 learning and teaching that many researchers have written off. Could it be that all this recitation out loud is really a source of comprehensible input (CI)? Is reading out loud a special form of comprehensible output (Swain, 1985) also acting as a limited yet sufficient source of CI and therefore allowing them to learn the language?

ENTRY 6

As I wandered (wondered?) around Beijing within the first weeks of my arrival, I was excited about the ideal atmosphere that existed for learning a second language (L2). Everywhere I went, I heard only Chinese; everyone was willing to speak to me in Chinese. As time passed, I became less optimistic for I realized that being in the bath was not enough-I needed to be able to make sense of the language, to begin to crack the code. I reviewed in my mind Krashen's (1985) theory of comprehensible input; i.e. that acquisition is responsible for fluency in the language; rule learning can only have an indirect effect on production. I began to wonder if CI was really enough, if rules were futile. I began to wonder if Krashen had not skipped over a stage in the L2 learning process. Acting as much out of instinct as frustration, I got a Chinese grammar book and a few hours of explanation in English of how the Chinese language worked,how it was organized, how it cut up time and action. As a result of these lessons, I began to make sense of what the people were saying. I began, for example, to distinguish questions from statements (I can now do it by intonation). I came to realize that grammatical knowledge played an important role in comprehension, in helping me understand even though I could not produce. The same process also proved to be true for vocabulary. Although I could not use the vocabulary I had memorized, it certainly was useful in helping me understand some of what was being said. As a result of my experience, I had to admit that knowledge of grammatical rules enhanced my comprehension of the language. When as language teachers and theorists we decided to discard grammar-based syllabi, we failed to realize that grammar does have an important role to play in learning. The learning of rules within a meaning-based syllabus is not a waste of time; such learning just does not automatically result in acquisition, in production, but it does improve comprehension.

ENTRY 7

My Chinese teacher selected a notional-functional text to use for our weekly meetings. We spend about four hours on each lesson (It would take considerably more time if I knew any characters-I don't do any of the drills as all instructions for them are in Chinese). The lesson usually consists of repeating the vocabulary and the texts found in the book. In the beginning he was not willing to vary from the text but now we have short conversations and he is less insistent on repetition. He is also spending increasing amounts of time on making me aware of the reductions that take place in the spoken language. He reads the text in standard dialect and then at a more familiar level.

In many cases, my interventions have been to obtain vocabulary or to learn structures to meet pressing needs of one I see will arise in the near future. Over the few months I have been studying, I have become aware of the very arbitrary organization of textbooks. This is apparent at many levels. First the notions/functions, grammatical structures, etc. that are chosen, the contexts that are selected to present them and the progression for both the notions/functions and the contexts. I was reading for shopping, weather, asking directions the first day I arrived but they did not come up in the book till many weeks later and I ended up going ahead to study them myself. Needing them made me willing to put forth the extra effort to learn them. I wanted to be involved in the learning process from the beginning even if I did not know anything about the language. However, what I did know better than my teacher was what I wanted to use this new language for. Learning a language is always learning a language for some purpose; unfortunately, the learner's, the teacher's, and the textbook writer's view of what that purpose should be are often in conflict.

ENTRY 8

As I struggle to learn Chinese and tai-chi, I realize that many of the skills I took for granted as I matured physically and psychologically are no longer what they used to be. Memory-being able to remember long lists of vocabulary words, while still possible-took a lot of priming before it became relatively easy again. Motor and perceptual memory-being able to learn routines, being able to visualize them, was very difficult in the beginning. I often wonder what a challenge it must be for students who have not been in contact with the classroom for 15-20 years. We often label them as slow learners. I believe this is really a misnomer-they are really "rusty" learners. They need time and exercises to relearn these valuable skills.

ENTRY 9

TO BE CONTINUED.....

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L'Influence de Confucius dans l'Enseignement en Chine et Réfléxions Personnelles

Wu Mingming

Introduction

Dans cet essai, j'aimerais présenter brièvement Confucius et ses orientations pédagogiques. Mon but est de démontrer l'influence qu'il a exercée et exerce encore dans la société chinoise. Dans un deuxième temps, je brosserai un tableau de la situation de l'enseignement en Chine et introduirai les modes d'enseignement des langues étrangères. Dans la dernière partie de mon écrit, je décrirai ma tâche d'enseignante de français au Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine de Beijing. Je vous ferai part des défis rencontrés, ainsi que ma façon d'y faire face.

Influence de Confucius sur la société chinoise

Confucius a vécu au VIe siècle av. J-C, période riche en mouvements et changements de société. Aristocrate de naissance, ses idées répondaient davantage aux besoins de la classes dominante. Il instaura une morale sociale axée sur la vertu de bienveillance (en chinois: Ren), d'équité (Yi) et de respect des rites culturels (Li). Les empereurs et hauts dignitaires en tirèrent profit afin de mieux assurer leur domination sur la masse. Déjà considéré comme un "maître" à son époque, Confucius fut par la suite déifié et érigé en roi spirituel.

1. Ses idées pédagogiques

Comme grand éducateur et penseur, Confucius a apporté une contribution extrêmenent importante dans l'enseignement en Chine. Jusqu'à présent, l'École confucianiste fondée par Confucius lui-même ou s'inspirant de sa doctrine pédagogique exerce toujours une profonde influence dans l'éducation de notre pays. Les idées de Confucius se traduisent dans les "Entretiens de Confucius" (cf. annexe 1) par les caractéristiques suivantes:

a) méthode de suggestion qui encourage les élèves à raisonner par analogie, ainsi pourront-ils procéder, à travers un fait, à l'inférence;

b) mise en valeur du caractère et des talents particuliers des élèves afin de mieux les orienter (cf. annexe 2);

c) combinaison de la réflexion et des études. Cela veut dire que les deux se complètent et s'enchaînent. On ne peut renoncer ni à l'un, ni à l'autre. C'est comme un constant mouvement cyclique: l'étude produit la réflexion qui produit la pratique qui produit l'étude. etc.;

d) considération des études comme étant une activité agréable, afin d'inciter la performance. Confucius insistait sur la façon avec laquelle les études devaient être plaisantes pour les élèves.;

e) attitude à adopter lors de l'apprentissage. Il demandait toujours à ses élèves de se montrer modestes et de condescendre à consulter un inférieur afin d'acquérir des connaissances supplémentaires, même si ces dernières pouvaient sembler négatives (cf. annexe 3).

2. Les défauts de Confucius

Confucius et ses disciples avaient leurs limites intrinsèques. Il faut se souvenir qu'ils ont vécu pendant une période de transition entre l'esclavagisme et le féodalisme. Avocats d'une société hiérarchisée mais décadente, ils étaient immobilistes et conformistes. Ils vouaient un culte extrême à l'égard des anciens. Pour maintenir l'ordre social, ils suivaient aveuglément et de facon draconnienne l'exemple des anciens et refusaient toute réforme en les considérant comme hétérodoxes (cf. annexe 4). Toutes ces limites étaient inéluctablement intégrées aux idées éducatives de l'École confucianiste. Bien que la modalité éducative ait été en quelque sorte flexible, on ne devait adapter son application à la situation, qu'à la seule condition de ne pas remettre en question ses principes fondamentaux. Si l'on jette un coup d'oeil sur le contenu de l'enseignement confucéen, on peut facilement constater qu'il est centré sur l'importance de la vertu. Les manuels que Confucius utilisait étaient essentiellement des recueils d'articles de la dynastie des Zhou de l'Ouest (11^{e} s-770 av. J-C). Face au ton moralisateur des articles conventionels et codifiés, qui leur étaient inculqués, les élèves ne pouvaient faire autrement que réciter et retenir par coeur ce que les "saints" confucéens avaient dit sans pour autant en comprendre le sens. C'était le seul moyen infaillible pour devenir mandarins.

Le rôle de la moralisation de l'enseignement était d'une importance majeure pour Confucius. Malheureusement, pour les dominants et les seigneurs, un bon nombre de ces normes n'étaient que des instruments destinés à mieux opprimer la plèbe. Asservie par ces contraintes morales, cette dernière n'avait que le choix d'une totale soumission et résignation.

3. Divinisation de Confucius

Quand on parle de Confucius, on parle au moins de deux personnages. Le premier c'est lui-même. L'autre, c'est celui développé et déformé par les classes dominantes et hauts dignitaires. A partir de la dynastie des Han de l'Ouest (dits Han antérieur 206-24 av. J-C), l'École confucianiste est devenue de plus en plus importante. La classe dominante tirait son profit des idées conservatrices de Confucius afin d'étrangler toute velléité d'initiatives, ainsi pouvait-elle mieux contrôler le peuple. L'Empereur Han Wu (140-86 av. J-C) n'a accordé toutes ses vénérations qu'à l'École confucianiste et l'accès aux autres courants d'idéologie a été strictement interdit. Cette situation est allée s'empirant. Sous la dynastie des Gong (960-1279), les principes de l'École confucianiste étaient érigés en évangiles, et Confucius lui-même fut considéré comme un roi spirituel. On peut ainsi dire que, dans la société féodale, la doctrine de Confucius fut la doctrine directrice plusieurs fois millénaire.

Enseignement en Chine

1. Généralités

En Chine, l'enseignement est étroitement influencé par la tradition confucéenne. Les enseignants chantent et psalmodient le Livre. Les élèves ne font que réciter, répéter et mémoriser. Ils doivent tout retenir par coeur! Jadis, dans les écoles privées, les maîtres demandaient aux élèves de réciter "Les quatre classiques" et "Les cinq livres". Ils ne se préocupaient pas de la comprénension ou de l'absorption des textes en eux-mêmes. Je cite ici quelques descriptions de Paul Monroe, expert américain de l'histoire de l'éducation, et L.H. Wilds, concernant l'éducation dans l'ancienne Chine: le système éducatif créé par Confucius est "mémoriser"-développer la faculté de mémoire et de reproduction, et non pas de déclencher chez les élèves la faculté de logique, de création et de raisonnement. L'éducation orientale est axée sur la "récapitulation", la Chine est typique en la matière. L'éducation orientale-surtout en Chine-prend figure de récapitulatoire du passé. Le but de l'éducation chinoise est d'indiquer dès le début aux enfants la voie du devoir "path of duty". De nos jours, l'enseignement est toujours empreint de la modalité traditionnelle, surtout pour des disciplines telles que les lettres et les sciences humaines. Pour obtenir de meilleurs résultats, les élèves revisent sans cesse et répètent les phrases-clés. Pendant les cours, les enseignants analysent scrupuleusement le texte mot par mot. On ne néglige rien. Ils décryptent le sens littéral de chaque mot et identifient chaque idée principale. Malheureusement, cette approche ne favorise pas tellement l'élève brillant et ne le pousse pas à aller plus loin.

2. Enseignement des langues étrangères en Chine

C'est au début du siècle que l'enseignement des langues étrangères fut introduit en Chine. A ce moment-là, un vif contraste existait entre deux modes d'enseignement: l'indirect et le direct.

2.1 Mode indirect

Ce mode était surtout utilisé dans les écoles publiques. Les mots, les structures de phrases, la syntaxe, ainsi que la lecture et la composition n'étaient expliqués et enseignés aux élèves qu'en chinois. On n'encourageait ni l'expression orale, ni la comprehension auditive. L'écriture se faisait en langue étrangère mais selon les structures de la langue chinoise.

2.2 Mode direct

Jusqu'en 1949, dans les écoles des missionaires, un certain nombre d'élèves recevaient leur formation en langue étrangère, comme, par exemple, à l'École Zhen Dan (Aurore) de Shanghai. Les élèves bénificiaient de la sorte, d'une situation plus favorable à l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère. Non seulement l'enseignement était assuré dans la langue cible, mais encore les élèves devaient obligatoirement s'en servir en classe.

2.3 Mode synthétique

A partir des années 50, le mode synthétique a été adopté dans diverses écoles de langues étrangères. Ce mode implique que, à l'étape d'initiation, les élèves suivent les cours en chinois. En principe, la grammaire et la syntaxe sont expliquées en chinois par les professeurs, puis, à l'étape suivante, dans la langue cible. Ce mode combine les avantages des deux autres et peut répondre aux besoins des apprenants, surtout dans les écoles supérieures. On tient compte ainsi de l'esprit analytique des adultes et de leur propre expérience. De la sorte, aucune fonction de la langue n'est négligée: compréhension écrite, expression écrite, compréhension auditive et expression orale. Il semblerait que ce mode exige moins de temps aux étudiants pour atteindre un certain niveau. Mais il comporte aussi des aspects négatifs. A savoir, la connaissance de la langue est plus ou moins limitée; les expressions de la langue acquise sont encore très imprégnées des expressions et structures chinoises.

L'enseignement traditionnel des langues étrangères a évolué sous le choc des nouvelles méthodes d'enseignement occidentales. A partir du milieu des années 70, "nine hundred sentences in English" et "Linguaphone" étaient en vogue en Chine et la méthode audio-visuelle a été introduite dans beaucoup d'écoles de langues étrangères. Toutefois, les résultats obtenus n'ont pas été très encourageants du fait qu'on imposait aux élèves d'imiter d'une facon stérile. On ne tenait pas du tout compte des objectifs particuliers des apprenants ou de leurs caractéristiques individuelles.

L'enseignement du français au Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine

1. Le Mandat du Centre

Les deux tâches principales du Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine sont d'administrer les tests de français et d'anglais pour les boursiers de l'ACDI et d'assurer une partie de la formation linguistique et culturelle aux candidats dont le niveau de compétence n'est pas approprié pour se rendre tout de suite au Canada. L'enseignement offert à la section française s'inspire de l'approche communicative.

2. Le CLCC est un Centre bilingue. En principe, le français et l'anglais sont sur le même pied. Les cours offerts sont de qualité égale mais le nombre de candidats ne se compare pas. Ce semestre-ci, par exemple, il y a six classes d'anglais pour une classe de français. C'est dire que nous sommes entourés de professeurs et d'étudiants anglophones. On entend partout l'anglais. Maintenant que le nombre de professeurs canadiens bilingues diminue, les étudiants n'ont pas assez d'opportunité de s'exprimer dans la langue enseignée en dehors de la salle de classe.

3. L'approche communicative

Notre enseignement s'inspire de l'approche communicative. Nous insistons sur les fonctions langagières requises par les stagiaires lors de leur séjour au Canada, plutôt que sur une simple analyse méticuleuse de la syntaxe ou du lexique.

3.1 Mencius et l'approche communicative

Il y a plus de deux mille ans déjà que Mencius s'était rendu compte de l'importance de l'environnement pour apprendre une autre langue. Il disait que, pour apprendre une langue, il valait mieux vivre dans le pays. Sinon, dans un entourage parlant sa langue d'origine, même ardent à la tâche ou fouetté tous les jours, l'étudiant ne pourrait maîtriser une langue seconde.

3.2 Les cours offerts

A la section française du Centre, nous offrons les cours suivants: Écoute, Oral, Lecture et Écrit. Parfois nous offrons également des cours de Stratégies Académiques afin d'aider les candidats qui poursuivront leurs études à l'Université. La plupart du temps nous utilisons du matériel authentique et tâchons de tenir compte des besoins des étudiants. Ce qui demande beaucoup de flexibilité.

3.3 Matériel didactique

Au CLCC, nous possédons un large éventail de matériel didactique. Malgré ce fait, à cause de l'approche utilisée, les professeurs se voient dans la nécessité de développer une grande partie du matériel à partir de documents authentiques. Ceci est un problème pour le locuteur non natif. Nous disposons d'un Centre d'auto-apprentissage que les étudiants "sur-utilisent". Ils en veulent toujours davantage! Ils veulent réussir à tout prix.

3.4 Problème du stress pour le professeur

L'approche communicative est exigeante pour le professeur de français qui n'est pas un locuteur natif. Il est essentiel que celui-ci ait une excellente maîtrise de la langue enseignée. En Chine, ce n'est pas toujours le cas. En conséquence, pour les professeurs chinois qui doivent enseigner le français en s'inspirant de l'approche communicative, la tâche n'est pas simple. Surtout quand il faut donner aux étudiants des explications concernant les nuances entre les mots ou les différentes manières de formuler une même idée ou quand il s'agit d'introduire la langue dans son contexte culturel. C'est d'autant plus difficile pour les professeurs chinois ayant eu des professeurs européens, quand il s'agit de l'utilisation particulière d'expressions ou de mots français "québequistes". Pour citer un exemple concret, un jour que je lisais un article sur les plaques d'immatriculation au Québec, mon attention s'arrêta sur l'expression "Je me souviens". J'ai demandé alors à ma collègue canadienne-française ce que ça voulait dire, et une journée n'a pas suffi pour m'en donner la réponse !... D'autres expressions, telles que "ça pas de bon sens"; "ça pas d'allure"; "pousse, mais pousse égal"; "magasiner"; etc. m'étaient également totalement inconnues. C'est une des raisons pour laquelle les professeurs chinois doivent consacrer plus de temps à préparer leurs cours.

L'influence toujours persistante de la méthode d'enseignement traditionnelle confucéenne est une autre source de stress. Aux yeux des élèves, les professeurs sont les détenteurs du savoir. Ces derniers doivent, par conséquent, tout savoir et la moindre faute pourrait amener à douter de leur compétence. A cause de cette pression mentale, ils préfèrent toujours se raccrocher aux manuels et guides pédagogiques plutôt que de prendre des risques lorsque la situation s'y prêterait.

Une approche Pédagogique axée sur la communication est tout à fait différente de notre méthode traditionnelle d'enseignement des langues. Dans la plupart des instituts où on enseigne les langues étrangères, on a encore recourt à la méthode traditionnelle, selon laquelle le professeur représente le noyau de l'enseignement. C'est lui qui, toujours, a la parole. Pendant la classe, il explique les mots inconnus. analyse la grammaire, et fait exécuter des exercices, comme paraphraser, réciter, répéter, etc. S'il s'agit d'un cours oral, il prend comme modèle un dialogue. Il introduit des exercices de substitution et demande aux étudiants de comprendre d'abord le sens du dialogue, de réciter les mots et enfin de faire un dialogue du même genre. On n'attache pas d'importance aux techniques auxquelles on a recours pour animer la classe et susciter l'intérêt des étudiants. La classe manque trop souvent de vivacité et les jeux langagiers sont considérés comme une pure perte de temps.

Ce sont des difficultés que j'éprouve fréquemment dans ma profession. Il n'est pas toujours facile d'avoir à l'esprit toutes les particularités d'un apprenant chinois, de tenir compte de sa langue maternelle, et de son expérience passée en matière d'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère. Ces difficultés représentent de véritables défis pour moi.

Une autre difficulté est que, même si les étudiants chinois sont très disciplinés, ils sont souvent passifs. Ils ne participent pas assez activement en classe. Pour expliquer leur comportement on peut citer deux raisons principales: d'abord, l'influence de leur formation via la méthode traditionnelle qui inculque le respect des professeurs et défend de poser des questions trop difficiles. Au Centre, nos étudiants sont tous des adultes, et certains d'entre eux occupent un poste important dans leur unité de travail. Pour ne pas perdre la face devant les autres, avant de s'exprimer, ils s'efforcent de bien réflechir à leurs phrases pour que le vocabulaire, la structure et la grammaire soient corrects. Ils pèsent chaque mot et n'aiment pas trop se risquer.

Une autre source de stress, c'est le TESTCan. Le décalage entre l'enseignement utilisant l'approche communicative et la tension causée par la nécessité de passer le TESTCan semble créer une nervosité extrême chez les étudiants. L'attitude des professeurs est bien différente. D'un côté, les professeurs insistent non seulement sur la réussite du TESTCan, mais aussi sur une base solide et une connaissance variée de la langue. D'un autre côté, les étudiants aiment que l'enseignement demeure centré sur le Test en faisant beaucoup d'exercices similaires, comme des exercices de choix multiples ou des textes lacunaires, etc. Leur objectif de formation est trop polarisé par la réussite du TESTCan.

Un autre problème réside dans leur méthode d'apprentissage. Je cite ici l'exemple de la lecture à laquelle la plupart des étudiants chinois éprouvent des difficultés: s'ils lisent un texte dans un temps strictement limité, après la première lecture, ils ne peuvent pas saisir le contenu essentiel; au contraire, si on leur demande de résumer l'idée principale, la lecture prend alors beaucoup plus de temps. En plus d'un manque de compétence en langue française auquel ils doivent remédier, ils ont besoin de maîtriser certaines méthodes et habiletés. Ils rencontrent le même problème aussi bien dans la lecture que dans l'écoute: l'existence de mots inconnus nuit trop à leur compréhension écrite ou auditive. C'est pourquoi on voit toujours des étudiants tenant un dictionnaire dans la main et le consultant en toutes circonstances. Il y a même certains étudiants qui mémorisent des mots dans le dictionnaire sans en connaître l'usage ou la signification.

Il est un fait que l'amélioration des connaissances du français d'un étudiant chinois dépende d'un grand nombre de facteurs. Certains de ces facteurs relèvent de l'individu lui-même: sa mémoire, sa personnalité, sa façon d'apprendre, ses expériences scolaires ou ses aptitudes. D'autres facteurs relèvent de l'enseignement: la compétence des professeurs en langue et en didactique, le choix de la méthode, la manière d'enseigner. D'autres encore, relèvent du milieu français. La section française a aussi une autre particularité: le manque de candidats. Il en découle, faute de pouvoir partager en groupes un nombre si restreint d'étudiants, un mélange de tous les niveaux dans une même classe.

3.5 Ébauches de solutions

Comment peut-on bien fonctionner tout en tenant compte des facteurs et des difficultés plus haut mentionnés? Que peut-on améliorer grâce à l'intervention d'un enseignant?

L'approche communicative est-elle la seule voie qui puisse mener les étudiants au succès? Je pense que les réponses sont encore loin d'être définitives. Pourtant on ne cesse d'essayer de nouvelles démarches pour mieux enseigner.

Au CLCC, afin de créer une ambiance française, les trois professeurs de français partagent le même bureau. Quand nous avons des problèmes avec certains textes tirés de journaux, de revues et de magazines, nous consultons notre collègue canadienne française. La même chose concernant le matériel auditif ou audio-visuel. Nous avons beaucoup d'occasions d'échanger des idées en français dans notre bureau et cela, tant sur le plan professionnel que personnel. De plus, une fois par semaine, nous dînons ensemble, en discutant en français, afin de nous aider à élever notre propre niveau de français. Nous avons vraiment besoin de communiquer en français.

Ma collègue québécoise fait aussi des pieds et des mains pour découvrir où se trouvent les francophones dans notre milieu et des rencontres informelles sont organisées. De cette manière, le professeur chinois se sent plus à l'aise dans la langue enseignée. Le Centre nous a fortement encouragées à suivre des sessions de formation offertes par des linguistes françaises de l'Institut des Langues de Beijing et de l'Université de Beijing. C'est aussi pour nous, les professeurs chinois, un bon bain de français. J'ajouterai encore que les autorités canadiennes du Centre font des efforts énormes pour nous obtenir l'autorisation de participer à des Congrès, Colloques ou Conférences.

Afin de créer une ambiance francophone, nous organisons des activités pour les stagiaires chinois. Une fois par semaine, nous invitons un conférencier, effectuons une sortie, organisons un conférencier, effectuons une sortie, organisons un pique-nique ou quelque chose du genre. C'est que nous désirons fortement donner à nos étudiants la chance de parler français à l'extérieur de la salle de classe. Nous organisons aussi une soirée vidéo hebdomadaire.

Sur le plan personnel, nous offrons régulièrement des entrevues aux étudiants. Ce tête-à-tête-parfois coeur-à-coeur-nous aide à mieux comprendre nos étudiants. Ceux-ci nous demandent des conseils afin de mieux progresser. Parfois, j'ai le sentiment d'assumer un rôle de conseillère ou même de psychologue. En général, à moins d'avoir affaire à des débutants, ceci se passe en français. Cette communication est bien réelle.

Lors de mon enseignement dans la salle de classe, je ne perds jamais de vue que j'ai affaire à des professionnels qui, parfois, occupent des postes très importants dans leur unité de travail. Je les traite avec respect, considération et gentillesse. Ce qui leur manque, c'est une formation en français. Mes étudiants sont très motivés, très respectueux et avides d'apprendre. J'essaie de tirer profit de toutes ces aptitudes et tiens compte de leurs besoins langagiers spécifiques. Par exemple, ce semestre-ci, nous avons plusieurs médecins et nous offrons deux périodes particulières intitulées "A l'Urgence".

A cause des différents niveaux de nos candidats, nous offrons également des cours parallèles. C'est exigeant. Nous nous adaptons réellement à la clientèle qui nous arrive.

Est-ce que mon approche pédagogique est "purement" communicative? J'avoue que non. Je n'hésite pas à expliquer les points grammaticaux qui sont nébuleux, car mes étudiants aiment comprendre le pourquoi de tel ou tel usage. Par exemple, je vais expliquer quand est-ce qu'on utilise le présent, l'imparfait, le passé composé, etc. Je peux donner des exercices structuraux concernant les expressions: je sais que, je pense que, etc. Il m'arrive également de faire répéter des phrases à l'Oral, ou même de faire mémoriser de courts dialogues.

Pour moi, je tâche de combiner le traditionnel, le fonctionnel et ce que plusieurs appellent la méthode communicative. Je suis une intégriste. J'aime recueillir tout ce qui est bon que ce soit dans le traditionnel ou le moderne, et je sais m'adapter à la situation présente.

Conclusion

Lors de notre éducation, enseignants et apprenants chinois avons été burinés par les enseignements de Confucius. Qu'on le veuille ou non, nous sommes toujours imprégnés de ses principes pédagogiques. Il n'est pas facile pour un professeur chinois d'enseigner les langues dans le contexte d'une approche communicative. Pour moi, je tâche de garder le meilleur de la modalité traditionnelle tout en essayant d'encourager la communication. J'ai moi-même beaucoup appris depuis que je travaille au CLCC et cela autant linguistiquement que pédagogiquement. J'ai appris selon le LIVRE et j'enseigne encore en me servant de manuels, mais je me sens désormais plus libre face à ce qui est écrit. Je n'hésite pas à mettre mes notes de côté quand la situation l'exige. Je sais davantage m'adapter aux étudiants et sais maintenant que tout enseignement qui se veut pertinent doit se baser sur les besoins de l'apprenant plutôt que d'après un programme préétabli, plus ou moins momifié. En définitive, je m'estime bien chanceuse de pouvoir travailler avec des professeurs canadiens qui sont toujours prêts à m'épauler ou me donner un coup de main. Grâce à cette étroite collaboration, la qualité de l'enseignement s'est nettement améliorée à l'Université dans laquelle je travaille.

LISTE DES ANNEXES

ANNEXE 1

Les "Entretiens de Confucius avec ses disciples" est un des quatre livres canoniques de l'École confucianiste. A l'époque, Confucius enseignait en échangeant des propos avec ses élèves. Après sa mort, ses disciples ont rédigé ce livre avec les notes qu'ils avaient prises lors des conversations avec leur maître. Le livre comprend vingt articles et quatre cent quatre-vingt douze chapitres qui expriment les doctrines essentielles de Confucius sur l'éducation.

ANNEXE 2

Entretien de Confucius avec trois de ses disciples (Zi Lu, Ran You et Gong Xihua): "Faut-il que j'agisse quand on me le propose?", demanda Zi Lu. Confucius répondit: "Non, consulte d'abord ton père et tes frères". "Faut-il que j'agisse quand on me le propose?", demanda Ran You. "Oui", répondit Confucius. Sans comprendre, Gong Xihua lui demanda pourquoi les réponses étaient différentes. Confucius répondit: "Zi Lu a autant d'ardeur et de hardiesse que deux; je l'ai arrêté et tiré en arrière. Ran You n'ose pas avancer, je l'ai poussé en avant."

ANNEXE 3

Confucius dit: Si je voyageais avec deux compagnons, tous deux me serviraient de maîtres. J'examinerais ce qu'ils ont de bon et je les imiterais; les défauts que je reconnaîtrais en l'autre, je tâcherais de les corriger en moi-même."

ANNEXE 4

Confucius mettait l'accent sur le travail, se basait sur des exemples tirés de l'Antiquité et encourageait la réflexion sur soi. Il disait de lui-même qu'il "s'attachait à l'antiquité avec confiance et affection", qu'il ne faisait que "transmettre" l'enseignement des anciens et "n'inventait rien de nouveau". Il disait s'être "appliqué à l'étude de la sagesse" à quinze ans, puis "à cinquante ans, il connaissait les lois de la Providence; à soixante ans, il comprenait, sans avoir besoin d'y réfléchir, tout ce que son oreille entendait; et à soixante-dix, en suivant les désirs de son coeur, il ne transgressait aucune règle".

En 497 av. J-C, Confucius devint le premier ministre du Royaume des Lu. Il fit tuer, sept jours après son accès au poste, Shao Zhengmao, rénovateur du Royaume, pour avoir répandu des "propos hétérodoxes".

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A Call for Papers

The Canada-China Language Centre at Beijing Normal University publishes *Monday Morning/Lundi matin* for those who teach English or French as a Foreign Language in China. Papers submitted for inclusion in the journal should touch on some aspect of EFL or FFL for Chinese speakers. For the 1992 issue, submissions in English or French will be welcomed. Articles must be received by the Editors no later than January 1st, 1992. Please submit one-double-spaced typewritten copy of an article no longer than 12 pages. Preference will be given to papers of practical use to the classroom. There must be references for all quotations and all works mentioned. References must include all the author(s') name(s), title, publisher, place and year of publication. Note page numbers for all quotations. Include an autobiography no longer than 35 words. Receipt of papers will be acknowledged, but papers will not be returned. Payment for published articles will be in copies.

Un article, s'il-vous-plait!

A l'intention des professeurs qui enseignent le français ou l'anglais comme langues étrangères en Chine, le Centre Linguistique Canada-Chine à l'Université Normale de Beijing publie *Monday Morning/Lundi matin*. Les articles soumis pour fin de publication devront traiter d'un point ayant trait à l'Enseignement du Français ou de l'Anglais comme Langues Étrangères à des apprenants Chinois. Pour le numéro de 1992, vos soumissions d'articles--en français ou en anglais--seront les bienvenues. La date limite pour la réception des articles est le 1er janvier 1992. Les articles ne devront pas dépasser 12 pages et être dactylographiés à doubles interlignes. La préférence sera accordée aux articles traitant de sujets pratiques. Pour chaque citation et pour les ouvrages mentionnés, il est essentiel de fournir une référence complète. Nous vous prions de bien vouloir indiquer le nom de l'auteur, le titre de l'ouvrage, le lieu et l'année de la publication. Il est aussi important de préciser la page de la citation faite. Également, veuillez inclure une courte autobiographie ne dépassant pas 35 mots. Pour chaque article reçu, un avis de réception sera émis. Toutefois, les articles ne vous seront pas retournés. En guise de remerciement pour chaque article publié, quelques copies de *Monday Morning/Lundi matin* seront offertes.

Merci de votre collaboration!

Thank you for your interest.

Pat Donnelly & Ken Keobke, Editors

July, 1992
Juillet, 1992

Volume 5, Number 1
Tome 5, Numéro 1

Monday Morning/Lundi Matin

A Magazine for Language Teachers in China

Revue pour les professeurs de langues en Chine

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MONDAY MORNING/LUNDI MATIN

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Juillet, 1992, Tome 5, Numéro 1

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République Populaire de la Chine

今年是中国—加拿大语言中心成立十周年，也是北京师范大学九十周年校庆，借此机会，我们出版这期新的《 Monday Morning/Lundi Matin 》作为中、加中心全体人员的献礼。

中、加语言中心的任务是对中方赴加项目人员进行语言、文化的培训工作。在中国、加拿大教师的同心协力，密切合作下，课堂教学和学术研究方面都取得了显著的成果。中、加语言中心是一个团结、活泼、充满友谊的国际大家庭，这本小册子也是双方辛勤笔耕的结晶。同时对那些关心本杂志并给它撰文的朋友们，我借此向他们表示深切的谢意。

另外，特别要提到的是我们的编辑，加拿大教师 Ken Keobke ，和 Pat Donnelly ，他们为本杂志花费了大量的宝贵时间和精力，我也借此向他们表示衷心的感谢。

最后，愿中国—加拿大语言中心充满活力！
愿中国—加拿大两国人民的友谊万古常青！

北京师范大学
中国—加拿大语言中心
中方主任　　陈达星

一九九二年　六月

Preface

China's increasing contacts with other countries through economic, educational and scientific exchanges have placed growing demands on its language teaching institutions to turn out candidates capable of communicating effectively in a foreign language. Trying to meet this demand has not been easy. Language teachers and language teaching researchers are constantly searching for ways of retaining the most effective aspects of Chinese teaching methodologies - China has produced and continues to produce many excellent language learners - and of incorporating new materials and methodologies that will enable learners to develop better communicative skills. This search has led to the development of new context-sensitive curricula, new teacher training programs and new approaches to testing. Many experts (language teachers among them) believe that it is in the testing area that the most important changes must take place if new teaching ideas are to be implemented as testing has such a powerful washback effect on both teaching and curricula.

As these new initiatives take form, I hope that Monday Morning/Lundi Matin will be here to report on them for you. As it is through the dissemination, implementation and discussion of ideas that change comes about, we hope that we can play a small but important role in this area with our journal.

As Academic Advisor, I would like to thank Ken Keobke and Pat Donnelly for their many hours of work to produce another excellent edition of our journal, for their contribution over the last few years to language teaching in China and in making our journal available to an ever expanding readership.

Bob Courchêne, Ph.D.
Academic Advisor

Avant-Propos

Les contacts accrus de la Chine avec les pays étrangers, par le biais d'échanges économiques, éducatifs et scientifiques ont poussé les différentes institutions à essayer de former des candidats capables de communiquer efficacement dans une langue étrangère. Faire face à ce défi n'a pas été chose facile. Linguistes et professeurs de langue sont constamment à la recherche de moyens pour sauvegarder les méthodologies d'enseignement des langues qui sont efficaces en Chine - la Chine a produit et continue de produire d'excellents apprenants qui parlent couramment plusieurs langues étrangères - et pour incorporer de nouveaux matériaux et/ou techniques qui contribueront à développer leur habilité à communiquer. Cette recherche ardue a résulté dans l'élaboration de nouveaux curriculas axés sur la communication tenant compte du contexte chinois, à de nouveaux programmes de formation des maîtres ainsi qu'à de nouvelles approches au "testing". Bon nombre d'experts (incluant des professeurs de langue) s'accordent à dire que c'est dans le domaine de l'évaluation que des changements substantiels seraient à apporter afin que le testing soit plus en harmonie avec une méthodologie d'enseignement axée sur la communication.

Pendant que ces initiatives sont en train de germiner, j'espère que Monday Morning/Lundi Matin saura les partager adéquatement avec vous. Etant donné que c'est en répandant des idées et en les discutant que ces dernières font leur chemin, nous espérons que notre journal saura apporter une toute petite contribution dans le domaine de la didactique des langues en Chine.

En tant que Conseiller académique, j'aimerais remercier Ken Keobke et Pat Donnelly pour toutes les heures de travail qu'ils ont consacrées à notre journal. Pendant leurs années d'enseigement en Chine, j'apprécie la contribution apportée ainsi que les efforts déployés afin de faire connaître Monday Morning/Lundi Matin à un plus grand nombre de lecteurs.

Bob Courchêne, Ph.D.
Conseiller académique

Introduction

The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) at Beijing Normal University is part of the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program, which was established in 1983 by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and is managed by Saint Mary's University in Halifax. The program's services play an instrumental role in CIDA's China-related development activities which include the transfer of knowledge through academic, professional and technical exchanges. As well, the program contributes to the improvement of the teaching of English and French in China.

The Canada/China Language and Cultural Program provides English or French language training for CIDA-sponsored Chinese trainees at the CCLC and at extension centres in China, and cross-cultural training and ongoing support for these people when they go to Canada. Services in Canada are provided nation-wide by a network of Regional Orientation Centres and Outreach Officers.

Introduction

Le Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine (CLCC) de l'Université normale de Beijing est l'une des composantes du programme linguistique et culturel Canada/Chine qui a été établi en 1983 par l'Agence Canadienne de Développement International (ACDI). Le programme est administré par l'Université Saint Mary's d'Halifax. Les services offerts jouent un rôle instrumental dans les activités de développement déployées par l'ACDI qui incluent un transfert d'expertise par le biais d'échanges académiques, professionnels et techniques. De plus, le programme contribue au développement de l'enseignement du français et de l'anglais en Chine.

Au CLCC et dans des Centres satellites de la Chine, le programme linguistique et culturel Canada/Chine offre une formation linguistique et interculturelle suivie d'un soutien continu pour les stagiaires allant au Canada. A travers tout le Canada des services sont offerts par un réseau de centres régionaux et de programmes d'appui.

Editorial

Welcome to another issue of Monday Morning/Lundi Matin.

These pages offer a broad range of issues in the teaching of English and French in China from the technical examinations of Jia Zhimei and Shang Quanrong to the reflections and recommendations of Lisa Carducci, Liu Luoting and Bob Courchene. Colette Soucy speaks about both the history of foreign language teaching in China, and the approach used for teaching French at the CCLC, while two other teachers, Li Zhengming and Xu Jingping provide notes on pre-listening activities. Liu Jie explains the components of a needs analysis, and Y.Z. Sun discusses considerations in the construction of a needs analysis.

As teachers, all working hard in our own classrooms in China, we sometimes find ourselves cut off from others in our profession. We hope that a journal such as Monday Morning/Lundi Matin reaches out a helpful hand to each reader. In October, the Canada/China Language Centre will celebrate both its 10th year of work in China and Beijing Normal University's 90th year. To mark these anniversaries, our next edition will invite selected writers who have been involved in the CCLC over the last decade. We hope you will write to us to ask for your copy.

Our thanks to Huang Jianhua and Colette Soucy for their thoughtful assistance in the preparation of this issue.

Pat Donnelly, Ken Keobke

Editors

A Preliminary Study of the Vocabulary Differences between English and Chinese

Y. Z. Sun

Chinese is an ideogram-based language with a large character set and it is drastically different from any Latin-based foreign language. While learning English, Chinese students usually are strongly biased by their mother tongue and Chinese culture. Some major differences between the two vocabularies are discussed in order to help Chinese students gain real power over English words and be more effective in cross cultural communication.

In China, since 1988, a nationwide standardized test, the College English Test (CET) has been in use. The test is designed to provide valid test scores for an assessment of English proficiency of college students, who have taken 2 years of college English as a service program (ESP). The statistics show that most students have a good command of grammar, lexis, and phonology. However, in the compulsory essay writing, which makes up 15% of the test score, many students either fail or do poorly. The requirements of the essay writing are quite simple, about 120 words of plain English on a given topic. Preparation for essay writing which involves cross cultural communication is considered as the most difficult part in the test. In some "good" essays, the English, while perfectly grammatical, tends to include many words which are English in lexical form, but Chinese in cultural content. The students seem to strongly abide by the Chinese cultural code and tend to use many concepts peculiar to China and hardly familiar to native English speakers; for example, many ideology-laden big words, such as four modernizations, proletarian dictatorship, responsibility system and united front.

Many college students seldom or never think in English. When asked, some students just say "I know what I mean, but I can't seem to express it ..." and feel helpless in essay writing.

Ineffective cross-cultural communication is the natural result of the teacher-centred, test-oriented classroom English teaching, which is still a dominant teaching method in China. The remainder of this paper focuses on the discussions of mastery of English words, and the differences between Chinese and English.

Some Main Differences between Chinese and English Vocabularies

I. Structural Differences

When two cultures with widely different value-systems communicate, one is made acutely aware of the difficulties of the task, and sometimes with a sense of helplessness. It is more difficult for a Chinese to learn English than any other Oriental language because of dramatic differences between English and Chinese.

Chinese is an ideogram-based language with a large character set, whereas English is a Latin-based language. Chinese characters, or parts of it, are based on some simple pictures. For instance, the moon, the sun, mountains, a bird, and farmland are simple pictures which symbolize words and form a group of nouns or action words, some of which are thousands of years old. Later, other complicated words or abstract words were coined by scholars and they constitute the majority of Chinese characters. Some characters evolved or stemmed from the ancient script, the so-called tortoise shell words (see note 1).

Since these later coined words, most of which are abstract words, were constructed on the basis of simple picture-like words, we can easily guess their meanings through identifying their formative parts. For example, words related to property, market transactions, treasures, money or merchants all have the radical for shell as the main part because in the past, a certain species of sea shell was used as currency. Words naming different birds have a part of the character, bird. There are about eight thousand basic characters, which can be combined to form millions of words or phrases.

A Chinese character itself, unlike English vocabulary, is not related to tenses or the plural of nouns. An English word comprehends all the morphological variants of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Thus boy, boys; bring, brings, bringing, brought; big, bigger, biggest are regarded as three lexical words. English word formation varies in many aspects that differ from Chinese, and trouble the Chinese students, such as acronyms, back formation, compounding, and derivation.

Simple ideogram-based words are taught in kindergartens and elementary schools in China. Each character is a pattern, which looks very much like a picture and which can be easily memorized by children. Learning Chinese can be characterized as pattern recognition, which is a distinguishing feature of Chinese culture, different from Western cultures. For instance, when asked for direction, a Chinese describes the location by pointing out its visual features instead of its coordinate position. Though pattern recognition has been found to be helpful in children's brain development, it certainly adversely affects learning English.

As a result, Chinese students, even some who are motivated, still stick to their conventional method to learn English. Some "brilliant students" try to memorize a whole English-Chinese dictionary in an attempt to master English vocabulary. To most students, mastering English words is still the main problem.

II. Cultural Gaps

Language and culture are inextricably tied together, and it is not possible to use a language without a cultural base. Chinese are proud of their rich colorful ancient allusions, proverbs, idioms and phrases, most of which are associated with well-known historical events and possess far reaching philosophical significance or stem from famous poems. In Chinese essays people like to use quotations and phrases to support their viewpoints. In ancient times, the classics and Confucian teachings were extensively studied and widely used in the stereotypical writing (eg. the eight-legged essay) in order to pass the Imperial examinations and to become an official. People had to state their viewpoints in a circular way to protect themselves from political oppression. Such an unhealthy influence became rampant during the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution and still exists today.

Mastering classic idioms and phrases constitutes an important part in learning Chinese. Without sufficient knowledge of them, it is difficult to understand Chinese literature or conventional Chinese. In learning English, students are eager to know the English version of these Chinese phrases, if they are translatable. There are some homilies common to both languages, such as "kill two birds with one stone" and "where there is a will, there is a way". But unfortunately there are few such examples. On the other hand, there are many contradictory figures of speech. For example, Chinese expressions associate the rat or mouse with a wicked coward, and an owl symbolizes evil spirits whereas English expressions emphasize the dirty nature of the rat and use chicken-hearted instead to say someone is timid and the owl to stand for wisdom.

Similarly there are many English words and phrases which have obscure morphologies. If a Chinese student takes them literally but not figuratively, he can not comprehend the real meaning of these words, to say nothing of using them properly. For example, phrases such as the best foot forward, a red herring, betrayed by a kiss are all confusing. But after reading about Queen Cleopatra students find it easy to understand "if the nose of Cleopatra had been shorter the whole face of the earth would have changed." The examples involving cultural differences are numerous.

A key technique in writing English is to use proper words in proper cases. There are cultural assumptions about what language is appropriate for particular situations. However, the presentation of an argument that sounds fluent and elegant in one culture may be regarded as clumsy and circular by members of another. A proper word to a Chinese mind may not sound proper at all in English. For example, Chinese use apology extensively and lack a sense of humor in conversation. To Chinese, modesty is highly appropriate; to Westerners it is not. In China, self criticism and apology are not only an admission of faults as they usually are in the Western countries, but also a social lubricant and good manners. In the preface of almost every book, Chinese authors say "there is still room for improvements" and "your suggestions and criticism are greatly appreciated" to show modesty. When a Westerner introduces his personal achievements humorously, his Chinese audience may think that this fellow is boastful. If a Chinese greets a Westerner by asking him "Have you eaten?" every time they meet, we doubt it would sound cordial and friendly to a Westerner.

Suggestions for Building and Using English Vocabulary

Building and using an English vocabulary is a dynamic lifelong job, and requires a constant and systematic use of one's will to learn. There are no easy ways of acquiring and mastering a good vocabulary. College English teachers should urge their students to take advantage of opportunities in English classes to make a real start on the difficult but fascinating study of words.

Intelligent reading and careful listening will bring many new words to our eye and ear. Reading aloud some original essays or well written short stories by native English authors is good practice and learning a whole sentence containing the new words or phrase is also recommended. This is the first and indispensable step, enlarging our vocabulary.

There are several other ways of stimulating and advancing this tedious process of acquiring new words, such as paraphrasing, essay writing, and translating. Informal essay writing proves most helpful for Chinese students. It offers opportunities for self-expression, and it is either wholely or largely composed of personal observation and reflection. Good essay writing involves careful thinking, close observation, and a painstaking search for the right words, the inevitable words. The careful attention to subject matter calls for a meticulous weighing of each word, each sentence and each paragraph.

The next most direct attack upon the problem is to learn to utilize words which we already have in our potential or recognition vocabularies. By means of this potential vocabulary, we can understand speakers and read and understand books, magazines, and newspapers. A Chinese college student usually has studied English for 9 years, and acquires a few thousand words, most of which are his potential vocabulary. Until he uses such words - puts them into circulation - they are not really his.

To get words from the potential into the active vocabularies requires systematic effort, but it is the easiest way to improve our English. Mastering them will avoid the pitfall of "swallowing the dictionary," a useless task which fails because it has no direct connection with our needs.

How to use words exactly and emphatically is the most important problem. It is indeed necessary to increase our vocabularies and not to use words incorrectly. But the mere size of one's vocabulary is not always a criterion of one's speaking and writing ability, nor does it follow that if one adheres to the principles of merely correct usage one will write effectively. Much dull and feeble writing may be correct, but correctness alone is a negative virtue. Using too many big words, multisyllabic words, and modifiers usually makes an essay boring. The best writing ordinarily consists of direct and simple words. For example, to say "the class struggle will be fierce in nature and long in duration" is wordy and jargonish; "the fighting will be fierce and long" is direct and emphatic. Using words clearly, exactly, strongly-that is what is most important and most difficult to do.

The exact use of words depends upon clear thinking and careful observation. If we have only a vague idea, we are prone to choose for its expression the first word that comes to mind. But if we know exactly what we have in mind, we will search for the word or words which will most completely and accurately express what we mean to say. To communicate clearly and forcefully we should use exact, vigorous words.

In order to present facts or ideas effectively, and to cause others to sense and feel what we have in mind, we must use concrete, specific words rather than vague, general terms. If you tell someone "a man entered the store" you give a general picture. But if you say that "a swarthy man slouched into the store," the picture is more concrete. Perhaps his entrance into the store was violent, rushed, or drunken. These all give a specific meaning not secured with the word "enter".

We should also note carefully the errors which Chinese most often make and avoid coining new words or new phrases, which, in most cases, turn out to be Chinglish.

Note 1: In 1899, some 3000 year old fossilized bones with strange symbols carved on them came into the hands of a philologist, Wang Yirong, and this led not only to great knowledge of the origins of the Chinese written language but to discovery of the site of the dynasty's capital. The discovery of these writings extends China's recorded history almost a thousand years. The ancient Egyptians and Indians all had written languages, too, but only ancient Chinese continued to develop into a modern form.

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Teaching Non-English Majors at Beijing Normal University

Liu Luxting

According to the College Syllabus, the students in Beijing Normal University should take a two-year English course, including intensive reading, extensive reading, listening and writing. The whole course is divided into four levels or four bands, one band for each semester, about 70 hours each.

The course is designed to help students to lay a basic foundation, reach a medium reading level with about 6000 words, learn to express themselves and communicate with each other in simple English, and understand classroom English. In addition, they should also be able to write short passages of about 150 words on ordinary subjects. At the end of the course, the students are encouraged to take the National College English Examination Band IV. Those who pass it receive a certificate.

There are about 1000 freshmen in this university every year. The usual teacher-student ratio is 1:35. This means each teacher has two big classes, sometimes even three. What's more, each teacher must take charge of all the teaching tasks - reading, listening, writing and grammar. In order to fulfil the tasks of each semester, teachers must complete one unit of teaching materials (ten units in all) within six teaching hours or six periods, that is to say, two passages of intensive reading (about 1500 - 2500 words), three passages of extensive reading (about 2500 - 5500 words), two passages of speed reading (about 400 - 700 words), including exercises of many kinds.

Usually teachers introduce a new lesson in the first two periods, paraphrasing difficult sentences, explaining language and grammatical points, and the usage of new words or phrases. Then in the second two periods, teachers help the students to grasp the main content of the text through exercises on the text, taking up homework and so on. In the last two periods, teachers introduce extensive reading and a quiz on intensive reading. About 10 to 20 minutes should be set aside for speed reading or listening exercises. So every period is more than filled, and teachers can't afford any delay or waste of time in class. Discussion or free talk is simply out of the question. As a result, teachers can do nothing but control the content, stages and spacing of the lessons and decide who is to speak or answer the questions and when. A cramming method of teaching is most frequently applied. Teachers have enough time for preparation and correction work but none for research.

In such a class, only a few active students can follow the teacher and take some notes, while a considerable part of the class either sits absent-mindedly or does other things to occupy the time. When asked what they have learned from the new text at the end of the lesson, about one third of the class are usually completely at a loss.

Undoubtedly there are many drawbacks to this kind of teaching. The results are very disappointing. Sometimes teachers have to lower the requirements to let the students pass the final exam.

Most serious of all, about one third of the students, especially the students of the arts departments, lack interest or enthusiasm in their English study. Some think their own specialty has nothing to do with English; others think they will be middle school teachers, perhaps working in remote districts, with no chance to use English in the future. It doesn't pay for them to spend so much time on such a forgettable subject. There is no point for the authorities to burden them with learning English. Should they be freed from the pressure, they could do still better in their own specialty. Sadly, to most teachers, their complaint sounds reasonable.

Generally, good students usually set aside two hours for English every day. As for the weak ones, they have to spend more than three hours. That means the time ratio for inside and outside class is 1:25 for the good students and 1:5 for the weak students, while the normal time ratio should be 1:2 or 1:3. "As a result, a 'non-major' subject has become a 'doubled-major' subject," they complain. When asked, nearly all students think English is the most strenuous and time-consuming subject. "I feel as if I am living in a shadow of English from morning till night. It disturbs me in my dreams sometimes," said one of the better students.

It is high time to take a serious look at the whole problem. Measures must be taken to remedy the situation in order to meet the needs of the country. The following may be the most pressing matters of the moment to cope with.

1. Considering the wide range of English teaching levels in middle schools, freshmen should be divided according to their ability and remedial classes should be set up to help them to complete their four band English course in different years, say, in two and a half or three years.
   Those who have not studied English in middle school may be relieved of the subject through special permission or may elect to choose it, according to their capability and available opportunities.
2. Teachers should be encouraged to improve their teaching techniques. Efforts should be made in the following areas:
   a) Introduce practical methods for English study. With efficient methods, teachers can win half the battle. It is especially important for their future study to help the students to form good study habits.
   b) Help the students build up a sound vocabulary by teaching them to define the meaning of new words through context, connotation and collocation, and to remember words by patterns and phrases instead of remembering them separately.
   c) Increase students' involvement in class by gradually introducing pair work or group work according to the specific conditions. Patience and understanding are needed in this work. The purpose of pair or group work is to encourage students to communicate with each other and to train their ability to express themselves.
   d) Excellent students can only be produced by qualified teachers. So teachers should also be provided with the chance to improve their own English and their teaching methodology. Today it is possible for the young teachers to engage in advanced studies abroad.
3. Ideological work is necessary to motivate students to overcome their difficulties and study hard and efficiently.

China's Open Door policies have provided people with more chances than ever to use English. English has become one of the most important means in international exchanges, to learn good methods of management from foreign countries, to catch up with the latest developments in science and technology, to work in joint-venture enterprises or foreign-funded businesses. In short, English is now playing an important part both in the reformation and modernization of China at present and will continue to do so in the future.

Many other good examples can be cited to rouse motivation to learn English. For instance, Hua Luogeng, Li Siguang, Qian Xuesen, and many young scientists who have made great contributions to our country all have a good command of English.

Mr.Ji Chaozhu once worked as an English interpreter for Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai and took part in the famous first Sino-American talks. In a way, we may very well say that Mr.Ji served as a bridge for the friendship between the two great nations. What's more, he is now serving in the United Nations as a Vice-President, working for the good of the whole world. Of course, he never dreamed of playing such an important role when he was a college student.

Therefore, there is no knowing what the young will do or can do in the future. One thing, however, is certain: more knowledge provides more chances for one to display one's value. Whether a person is engaged in science or diplomacy, business or teaching, a good command of English can help. In addition, good English may serve as a window or channel to see and know the outside world better and can make an individual's life more meaningful.

Meanwhile, one point must be driven home to students that taking English as a means for seeking personal pleasure only and even going so far as to forget their own country is mean and disgraceful.

Though our achievements may be much less than those of the above mentioned people, what we learn will inevitably benefit not just ourselves but also the people around us and, by extension, the country, and even the world.

4. Ideological work does not always work, however. Discipline is necessary to maintain a smooth teaching flow. The authorities should also make certain rules and regulations to encourage students to develop a good command of English.

Fortunately, the university authorities have recently made it a rule that only those who pass the National College English Examination Band IV can receive a degree certificate, certain scholarships, and can qualify to enroll for the graduate student examination. No further comment is necessary on the decision; the future will speak for itself.

If the above suggestions and methods are accepted or carried out, both the teachers and students involved will certainly do a far better job. The day when English study is considered a burden will pass.

Premières impressions et réactions

Lisa Carducci

Et si je vous jetais, comme ça, tout pêle-mêle, des impressions "chinoises"? Quand je rédige un article de façon systématique, j'aboutis facilement à plus de vingt pages, alors mieux vaut causer tout simplement de sujets qui nous intéressent tous, en tant que profs, et m'arrêter quand le nombre de lignes qu'on aura bien voulu m'accorder sera atteint. D'accord?

1. La hiérarchie
   Dans cette société fondamentalement collective, toute personne s'en réfère à une autre qu'elle considère supérieure à elle en expérience ou en sagesse (lire âge): son ancien professeur, son chef de section, son doyen. Cette façon de procéder va à l'en-contre de nos moeurs nord-américaines où prime le "tout, tout de suite" et où l'individu est hautement considéré. La prise des décisions entraîne donc des délais. Toute question est discutée, analysée, débattue en groupe, mais entre Chinois seulement. Les réunions du personnel à différents niveaux sont fort nombreuses, cependant les experts étrangers sont laissés en dehors. Veut-on éviter de nous embarrasser? Considère-t-on que les décisions ne nous regardent pas? Quoiqu'il en soit, on nous consulte, puisque nous sommes des "experts", mais... après. Et quand on nous demande nos commentaires, il est souvent trop tard. Faut-il s'en étonner? On a déjà vu cela "ailleurs" aussi, si je ne m'abuse...
2. Les relations interpersonnelles
   Elles ne sont pas spontanées, il faut les créer, après les avoir suscitées, autant avec les collègues qu'avec les étudiants, et parfois au sacrifice d'une bonne soirée de lecture. Dès les premières semaines de cours, j'ai trouvé des occasions pour inviter mes élèves à dîner avec moi: les six comédiens qui joueront ma pièce, aide particulière offerte à deux étudiants qui éprouvent de difficultés en composition, prêt de cassettes de chansonniers francophones à deux jeunes artistes, repas spécial au foie et aux épinards pour les donneurs de sang... Bien entendu, lors de ces visites, nous parlons de choses et d'autres, de leur famille, de la mienne; nous nous connaissons mieux et des liens solides s'établissent.
3. Se mêler de ses affaires
   On n'est pas obligé de rester en Chine si on n'aime pas ce pays! Dans le cas où l'on veut bien garder son poste, on se trouve parfois dans des situations ambiguës. Exemple: une vitre a été cassée au dortoir des étudiantes par une forte tempête de vent. Depuis, il pleuvait et faisait froid, et la jeune fille gelait dans sa chambre. Rien n'ayant encore été fait par les autorités, les étudiants décidèrent de manifester bruyamment en groupe et me demandent de me joindre à eux.
   Je leur expliquai donc que je trouvais fâcheux ce qui leur arrivait, mais qu'étant une "invité" dans leur pays, je ne pouvais me permettre d'intervenir dans une question qui les concernait, eux, Chinois. Porte de sortie? Esquive? Je me sentais lâche et j'avais mal au coeur de mon attitude mais il faut parfois sauver la chèvre et le chou.
   Vu sous un autre angle, ce genre de protestation de la part des étudiants apparaît comme une critique du système. Leur protestation peut nous paraître bien innocente mais peut avoir pour eux des conséquences graves (leur dossier les suivra toute leur vie). Donc, je décidai de poser un geste éducatif en les incitant à discuter entre eux pour voir s'il n'y aurait pas un autre moyen de régler le problème pacifiquement, leur suggérant d'envoyer ensuite leur chef de promotion déposer leurs doléances auprès des autorités.
4. Les salutations
   Les étrangers sont souvent embêtés par les salutations. A peu près tous les Chinois

connaissent le mot "Hello!" et la moitié d'entre eux savent dire "O.K." Or, dans la rue, pour être gentils, ils vous lancent ces mots à titre de salutation. Cela veut dire à la fois: "J'ai remarqué votre présence", "Vous êtes étranger/ère" et "Bonjour!" Mais le fait est qu'ils sont plus de 10 millions dans cette ville... Faut-il répondre à chacun? Alors sur trois kilomètres vous aurez salué au moins trois cents personnes! En ce qui me concerne, je trouve la chose parfois amusante, parfois harassante. Ne pas répondre, est-ce méprisant? Lui, des étrangers, il en voit un de temps à autre à Beijing, mais vous, des Chinois...

5. Les tabous

Bien des nouveaux venus en Chine sont surpris sinon insultés qu'on les interroge à brûle pourpoint sur leur âge, leur salaire, leur situation maritale. Les Chinois qui ont reçu une formation en civilisation étrangère (tous ceux qui ont appris une langue étrangère) sont de plus en plus nombreux à savoir qu'il ne faut pas poser ces questions. Si on ne veut pas répondre, on peut dire que dans notre pays, on ne parle pas de ces choses-là.

6. Sauver la face

Surtout, ne JAMAIS faire perdre la face à un Chinois. Si l'un des deux doit la perdre, que ce soit nous. C'est beaucoup moins humiliant pour un Occidental. Dans une situation épineuse, on devra se rappeler d'éviter à tout prix la confrontation directe. Si un problème se présentait en classe, je n'engagerais pas la discussion avec tout le groupe. Je demanderais à réfléchir, à consulter, inviterais les étudiants à faire de même puis je rencontrerais leur représentant. Alors qu'au Canada, l'élève se sent en position d'infériorité face à l'adulte, et que, fort dans son groupe-classe, il n'a plus rien à dire quand il est invité à rencontrer le professeur après le cours, ici c'est le contraire qui se produit. Un à un veut dire d'égal à égal. Notre promptitude occidentale peut nous amener à commettre des gaffes.

7. Détecteur de mensonge

Les étudiants (et pas seulement eux) sont curieux de savoir si on aime la Chine, ce que l'on aime en Chine et pourquoi. Une fois qu'on leur a répondu qu'on adore la Chine de façon congénitale et qu'on s'y sent comme chez soi, ils nous regardent, perplexes, comme si on venait d'énoncer une aberration. Comment un Occidental qui vient d'un pays riche, où il vit dans une grande maison et gagne beaucoup d'argent (nouvelle valeur chinoise) où il jouit de la liberté d'expression et de droits civiques enviables peut-il aimer la Chine? Si vous maintenez votre jugement, alors ils vous font passer un test: "Mais les autobus publics sont si bondés!", etc.

8. La politesse

En classe, les étudiants sont très attentifs, très disciplinés. Par contre, la participation traîne de la patte. Par éducation, les questions difficiles sont rares (ou posées après le cours), les colles absentes: on craint d'embêter l'enseignant. "Y a-t-il une différence sémantique entre féodalisme et féodalité", "Doit-on dire confucéen ou confucianiste?" Nous faisons souvent face à des termes peu utilisés dans "notre" langage, et l'étudiant sait que le professeur ne pourra peut-être pas répondre à brûle-pourpoint.

Le respect humain fait que les étudiants craignent de mal formuler une question. Aussi la prépareront-ils mentalement au point de vue vocabulaire, syntaxe, prononciation avant de la poser; on comprendra que la longueur du procédé enlève toute spontanéité à l'intervention et fait que, très souvent, l'étudiant ne placera pas un mot pendant le cours parce qu'il était trop tard au moment où il était prêt à parler.

9. La ponctualité

Plusieurs étrangers supportent à peine cette "manie de la précision" des Chinois: de vraies montres suisses! Malheureusement, quelques étudiants commencent à "s'adapter" aux retards répétés de certains de leurs profs et sont en train de perdre leur exquise "politesse des rois". A mon avis, les retards sont extrêmement limités (situations vraiment incontrôlables) dans les classes où les profs sont à l'heure.

10. La "privacy"

Intraduisible en russe autant qu'en chinois. (Caractéristique communiste?) Je reçois souvent des visites, de jeunes ou d'adultes. Il arrive qu'une lettre reçue traîne sur la table, ou encore que soit affiché un aide-mémoire pour le lendemain, que mon journal personnel ne soit pas rangé dans un tiroir ou que l'album de photos (ah! les photos, quel irrésistible attrait!) que je dois rendre à un collègue soit négligemment jeté sur un fauteuil. Puisqu'avec beaucoup de naturel les Chinois ont tendance à regarder tout ce qui leur tombe sous les yeux, on peut minimiser le problème en ayant de l'ordre, mais parfois, on est pris à l'improviste. Si je suis assez intime avec le visiteur concerné, je lui expliquerai que dans notre contexte occidental, on n'est pas habitué à cette façon de faire, que j'apprécierais beaucoup qu'il me demande l'autorisation de regarder mes objets/ papiers personnels. En général, les gens comprennent, et avouent même qu'ils n'aimeraient pas qu'on leur en fasse autant. Ils n'y avaient tout simplement pas pensé.

Conclusion

Culture ou acculturation? S'intégrer, c'est découvrir, connaître la culture de l'autre, s'y tailler une place sur mesure sans s'ingérer ni s'imposer. Cela n'a rien à voir avec l'assimilation. Je suis autant moi-même maintenant que je l'étais à mon arrivée à Beijing; mais je suis "autre", et probablement "plus".

Beijing Diary: Reflections on Language Learning and Teaching (II)

Bob Courchêne

Entry 9

There are no shortcuts to learning a language - there are only more effective ways or strategies: finding a Chinese friend, taking a content-based course given in the FL/L2. As I struggle with my language learning, I have come to realize that unless I invest the time learning and practicing the new vocabulary and structures in meaningful ways, I will never be able to speak the language. Even though I continue to listen to the news, I still haven't cracked the code. I am still at the level of only getting "Li Peng shuo, Jiang Zemin shuo". Exposure, even structured exposure, has not guaranteed understanding. I cannot construct a bridge between what I know and what I hear.

The more I listen to the news the more I realize why it is so difficult for students to understand. There is no redundancy, the aim of the news reporter is to present as much information in as short a period of time as possible. There are no repetitions, no paraphrases, no recapitulations other than the main points at the end of some newscasts. Another element that makes the Chinese programs so difficult for me is that I do not have the formal and content schema of Chinese society and culture. Very often in China, news items and programmes are related to cultural events with which I am not familiar. Without such background knowledge and the necessary linguistic knowledge, comprehension is very difficult. Difficulties at this level have made me more conscious that what I thought in the past were linguistic problems in my students' failure to understand a given aural or written text might have been a lack of background knowledge. For example, the curriculum we use to teach the trainees at the CCLC is set in western, technological Judeo-Christian society. In one of the passages from a module on smoking, there is an article entitled, "Sinners seek salvation in hypnotherapy". While many of the students understood all the words, they did not have the necessary schema to interpret what they might mean.

The understanding of a language is closely tied to socio-cultural knowledge. In order for someone to learn or teach a language, s/he must have access to that knowledge.

Entry 10

I have discovered to my daily embarrassment that the language of the FL/L2 classroom and the language of the street are frequently two different languages. When I am studying Chinese with my teacher, I benefit from a well defined and structured learning context. I know what we are focusing on in the lesson. As a result, vocabulary or grammatical structures that are introduced are easier to understand. Both the content and formal schema are provided for me. Furthermore, during my lessons I have control over the topics. I can initiate a conversation and decide what direction it should take. When I leave the classroom and step out into the street, I can no longer control all the factors. When I go shopping, I may ask for something before the shopkeeper has a chance to address me, but once I have made my request, I have no control over how the person will answer or what type of questions may follow. A request for a loaf of bread often solicits an inquiry as to whether I have a ticket(piao) to purchase the bread rather than a clerk handing me a loaf of bread. A recent conversation I had at the market illustrates this point.

Clerk: "What would you like?"
Bob: "Oranges." (I begin to pick the oranges I want).
Clerk: "You don't come here any more, why?"

Bob: Silence (It took me a while to process what was said, too long to be able to reply).
Clerk: "Do you want anything else?"
Bob: "No, how much is it?"
Clerk: "Five kuai."

This difference between the formal classroom instruction and street learning is even more evident when I go for walks with a Chinese student. On our walks, we try to do very practical things in terms of language learning-food, personal items, shopping terms, etc. As we walk along, she asks questions about what she sees or is going on in the street. My most frequent response to her questions is "ting bu dong," (I don't understand). I have no control over what she is going to say and therefore cannot anticipate/prepare myself. I cannot carry out any pre-listening exercises to prime my understanding.

As a result of these experiences, I understand better not only the role of authentic material in the classroom but how it should be implemented. Using such material enables teachers to help students bridge the gap between the FL/L2 classroom and the street. To use it though, the teacher needs to prepare the students adequately; otherwise trying to understand the texts will be very frustrating learning experiences for the students.

Another aspect of the classroom-street contrast (and which is also related to authentic language) is the type of language used in terms of register, dialect, speed of delivery. The langauge of the classroom is more controlled, formal and delivered in the standard dialect. While this is the normal way to begin language teaching, I have come to realize that continuing this way is not helpful in the long run. Words that I can understand during my lesson are unintelligible in the street. Expressions such as "Yao shenme"?, (What do you want?) change phonetically from in the classroom to in the street. As well, in Beijing and, in many other cities in China, a local dialect is spoken to carry out the daily tasks of living. In the beginning my language lessons did not prepare me for the shifts that took place; i.e., men-mir, hua-huar. My teacher now spends a great deal of time on this and I am really thankful for it. If the FL/L2 classroom is to prepare the student to function in the street, the teacher must help the language learner understand, though not necessarily speak, some of the important linguistic facts (accent, intonation) specific to a given language learning context. Personally, to function in Beijing, I need to know not only the official dialect, Putonghua but also Beijinghua. Without both, the little Chinese I know will not be of much use in trying to carry out simple language operations.

Entry 11

As I continue to study Chinese, I am beginning to learn language in chunks for both comprehension and production purposes but with a significant lag for production. Expressions heard in conversations (I am not certain if they must always be high frequency or not) now stick in my memory as chunks. I seem to be able to retain and work on larger blocks of language. At the beginning of my language learning, I tried to seize upon any recognizable word in the language. I had no anticipatory skills; I could not predict what might be said. Now as I listen to Chinese, especially when I know the conversation topic, my focus is on trying to grasp the new information. As I can anticipate some of what is going to be said, my language processing skills are freed up to work on the new segment of material that is being introduced. Being able to understand and retain chunks of language makes the understanding of new elements easier. In the beginning, it is necessary to hear certain stretches of discourse several times before they become chunks of language but as my understanding has improved, the chunking process happens in a shorter time. It also seems to happen when I am exposed to a lot of Chinese in a short period of time; i.e., when I have a large number of lessons combined with an opportunity to practise my Chinese in real life situations.

Entry 12

My Chinese teacher has finally decided to teach me characters (actually he wanted to do this the first day but I resisted). In selecting the characters that he wants me to learn, he is following a sequence that is significantly different from that followed by native speakers. He presents groups of similar characters and works on roots; e.g., female. My teacher, a specialist in teaching non-native speakers, has advised me not to use books that have been prepared for native speakers, not even those for children as they presume a lot of knowledge on the part of the learner, knowledge that I do not have.

What I have found in beginning to learn the characters is that some are very easy to learn, others much more difficult. In some cases, characters with an uncommon form are more easily remembered than five or six that resemble one another very closely. Knowing just a few characters has also piqued my curiosity. As I walk along the streets and recognize the ones I have already learned, I am very frustrated (in a positive way) as I want to be able to read the whole sign and not just one or two parts of it. As well, learning is not unlike learning words in that the more frequently one comes across the same character, the easier it is to remember it.

Entry 13

Master the old material before you begin anything new. Painters, calligraphers, scholars for centuries in China have mastered the material of the famous people in their field before they have tried anything creative on their own. In language learning, it is very similar. This is in contrast to the way I have learned and taught languages. I encourage my students to play with the language, to try out what they know. I do not insist on the memorization of lessons. Personally, I find it difficult to have to memorize a list of words and a dialogue based on it. First, as I have not done this for a long time, it is taking me time to relearn this skill. Second, and more important, I have a type of psychological block about the value of students' use of memorization to learn. Recently in the Globe and Mail, Canada's national newspaper, numerous articles have appeared detailing the differences between North American and Asian learning styles. Asian students' willingness to spend hours memorizing texts (and teachers' willingness to require it of them), has been the key to their success. It is already well documented that Chinese students who take the TOEFL test are able to achieve extremely high scores without being able to function well in the language, especially in the productive skills (Courchene and Ready, 1990).

This difference in learning styles has an important influence on language learning. If a learner must follow an imposed methodology that goes against the grain, it may create affective and/or psychological barriers to learning.

Entry 14

In the course of my language learning, I have noticed that the learning process is not at all linear. I go through periods when it seems that my language learning is going absolutely nowhere. I study, I take lessons but I stagnate. Then, all of a sudden there is a type of jump, a new level of understanding where the language is more comprehensible and I again feel that I am making some progress. Although a period of intense study is often necessary for this type of leap to take place, a period of intense study has not always been followed by initial progress but rather there is often some confusion until my mind tries to sort out the little Chinese I have into some comprehensible system.

In terms of language learning and teaching, I would recommend, based on my experience, that at the beginning of any language learning experience, learners have an opportunity to have an intensive period of language training. Intensive exposure to the language will allow them to construct a map of form and meaning of the language that will enable them to maximize their language encounters in the real life situations or to be able to obtain comprehensible input on their own through reading and listening to the radio and the television (the latter scenario being the Chinese context).

Entry 15

The more I study, the more I realize that my efforts at learning vocabulary are too hit and miss. When new words come up in my lessons, I write them down and then go back later to try to organize them in some logical fashion. As well, the Chinese vendors in the markets and the clerks in the stores are ever willing to give me lessons but by the time I have arrived home I have usually forgotten the word(s). The new words that I gather, are often just that, words. I don't have a context to refer to and I cannot really meet them again in my reading as I don't understand characters and there are no English/Pinyin readers. Memorizing the words is not enough to make them available to me when I need them for comprehension or production. For example, I have reviewed the vocabulary for vegetables frequently but when I get to the market I most often as not end up pointing or having to ask what it is. I feel I need to have support in all the skill areas to learn and practical contexts in which to practice what I have learned but I have not been able to create these situations for myself. As I go through the vocabulary learning process, I have come to realize how wrong I have been in saying that vocabulary is the students' responsibility; it is also the teachers' and the greatest challenge is to find ways of presenting it that will facilitate learning and retention.

Entry 16

Peaking too soon: Memorizing formulae or short useful phrases has been very useful in that they have enabled me to obtain valuable information. On the other hand, being able to utter them with near native like ability gives one's interlocutor the impression that one knows more of the language than is really the case. A short well uttered statement asking for directions often elicits a very rapid and detailed reply to which one can only reply "Xie, Xie," (Thank you) and leave. As long as my speech is heavily accented (which is the case 99% of the time), my conversation partner usually makes adjustments and speaks slower and more clearly. My non-native accent allows me to get more comprehensible input as native speakers are usually patient with learners and are willing to explain things to them in as simple a manner as possible.

A Final Thought

Overall, my language learning has been only moderately successful. What has been more valuable is (re)learning about what takes place when one sets out to learn a new language. As a result of my experience, I will be a better teacher and also a better language learner if ever I try to learn another language or in continuing to study Chinese. Finally, I will be more open to other peoples' ways of learning, and to other learning styles.

The Role of Discussion in the Classroom

Xu Jingping

Chinese students at the Canada/China Language Center (CCLC) study English or French for 4 to 8 months before going to Canada for further training in their fields. The CCLC offers courses in Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening as well as a cultural component. As for listening, students not only listen to authentic materials played on tape recorders, and to real life conversations, they also do some non-listening activities such as discussion. Often they do not understand such non-traditional techniques, yet, discussion plays an important role in the listening class. It introduces the topic which is to be listened to, and reinforces already existing knowledge.

However, lots of Chinese students do not realize the significance of discussion, or at least some did not when they were first introduced to such a method. Because of this reluctance, they have not benefited from it. In order to promote their perception of the role of discussion, we should first analyze why they do not like talking in the listening class. The reasons mainly fall into two categories: 1. Some students think discussing is a waste of time and 2. students tend to depend on authority, i.e., they want to get correct answers from the teacher, not from other students. Likewise, they themselves do not like to talk.

Firstly, some students think that talking wastes a lot of time. They frequently ask, "Why don't we just listen more?" There are historical reasons for this. Ten years ago, English teaching in China only emphasized reading and a little writing. Gradually, more people have become familiar with the communicative approach, so both teachers and students find that if they want to communicate with people in English they must have a good command of spoken English. Consequently, students have discovered that listening class and speaking class are absolutely necessary.

But at this stage, they think that listening is listening and speaking is speaking. They want to impress every listening message into their heads and try to understand everything just like a starving man wishes to swallow all the food available. And some teachers seem to have sympathy for such opinions. Moreover, it is easier for teachers to teach different skills separately instead of having a crossover of skills. As a result, both sides are wondering what the point is of talking in listening class.

Secondly, students want to get the correct answer for each problem. They like to have everything clear. Who has the authority? The teacher. Neither do they desire to search for words to express themselves nor do they have the patience to listen to their classmates faltering with opinions of whose credibility they are not quite sure. They think it stupid to talk over what they consider shallow ideas or nonsense. As an excuse, they feel that so long as they can understand, it's fine, and prefer to do simple exercises clearly explained by the teacher.

As regards these problems, being English teachers, we should find proper ways to let the students see the point of discussion in listening class. The above problems exist in many Chinese English teaching classrooms, but are not so serious in the CCLC. Nevertheless, we still hear some complaints here and there, especially from those whose weak points are in listening, since they think they should listen more in order to pass the CanTEST. We have the need to explain to the students how the discussion will influence their listening.

Students must be told that the acquisition of a language involves several integrated skills. In terms of listening, we cannot separate it from speaking. We must admit that when we try to listen to something unfamiliar, if we keep some questions in our mind and have some general knowledge before we really start, it will help. Besides, if we want to memorize something, for example, in our mother tongue, we do not just listen. Instead, we listen and repeat. That is the quicker and better way to remember. Obviously we can adapt this method to studying English. Students can benefit from discussion in two sections. One is pre-listening activities; the other is post-listening activities.

a. pre-listening

When students are exposed to topics with which they are not familiar, it becomes crucial to have pre-listening discussion. Otherwise, they will have great difficulty figuring out what is being discussed. A good case is the learning of the CCLC curriculum's Modules.

In the CCLC, students are given a series of Modules organized around typical Canadian experiences which they are likely to find unfamiliar but which they need to understand both to prepare themselves for study in Canada and to enlarge their comprehension of English in general. Module 11, for example, is about credit spending. There is a lot of cultural information involved. In one of the lessons, a woman gets into debt by using a credit card. But if students never use credit cards or never see one, how can they understand that one can use it to become $10,000 in debt without going over the limit? So before listening to materials like this, we must have some discussion. Fortunately, one of the students in my class is from the Ministry of Economics and Trade. She knows a lot about credit cards, loans and other bank business. Therefore, she was the resource person when the students discussed this topic. They talked about the advantages of using credit cards and the possible problems they might cause. Those are the same issues that the students face in the lesson.

The purpose of doing pre-listening discussion is to "...get the most out of the students about the topic" (Rixon, 1986) Through this procedure, the students have a great deal of anticipation before the real listening.

b. post-listening

Discussion in post-listening is also an indispensable part of listening class. Traditionally, after students finish listening, the teacher just checks the answers with the students who then leave the classroom.

Students are used to doing some test-like exercises, such as multiple choice quizzes, and receiving the answer keys afterwards. Some students can complete such exercises perfectly, but we are unsure of how many of their answers are based on guessing. Even though we assume that they can understand the listening material, so long as they can find the proper answers, we are unsure of whether or not the knowledge is their own or whether they can use the knowledge later on. Therefore, this kind of listening teaching cannot be successful, since understanding the listening material is not necessarily the end purpose. Whether students integrate the new message with their existing knowledge is still questionable.

As Rixon says, listening work provides an input or a stimulus to some other activity. (Rixon, 1986:72) The purpose of listening is not just to maintain listening skills but to grasp knowledge. Hence, after listening we should check the students' feedback on what they have just heard by asking them to do some meaningful activities such as making judgements and problem-solving. They can complete these tasks through discussion.

In this way, the listening class will be closer to real life listening. For example, when we hear a certain issue on the radio or on television, usually we will form our own opinions and exchange our ideas with others. In the classroom we can also do similar things. However, this can only be carried out on the condition that the listening materials are authentic, typical of the target language culture, and are also issues of public concern which students have need to discuss.

In our Listening Modules at the CCLC, we have one entitled "Recycling and Environmental

Protection". The garbage crisis is a big issue in China, so it is easy to organize a discussion after listening. In one of the lessons, students hear suggestions on how to reduce the amount of garbage, such as by reusing plastic bags, refusing unnecessary wrappings when shopping, and buying rechargeable batteries.

In the post-listening stage, a discussion on whether these suggestions were practical in daily life is conducted. Every student expresses his/her opinion in the group discussion and makes judgements based on their experiences. Some say that all the suggestions are practical and provide reasons; others think it is inconvenient to reuse plastic bags especially since people have already been accustomed to being given plastic packaging whenever they go shopping. One view is that people are inclined to adopt the simplest solution, that is, to throw away the package and get a new one next time.

In this activity, students have a chance to convey their agreement and disagreement with what they hear. That certainly achieves the goal to relate the new message to their own knowledge.

Another kind of post-listening discussion that we can use is to ask students to solve problems. Also in Module 11, Credit Spending, there is a lesson on making a personal budget. Since the above mentioned lady could not deal with money properly, she went to a counselling service for assistance. There she learned to live on a budget. Although most Chinese do not use credit cards, still it is necessary for them to make a proper budget in order to save each month. After listening to this lesson, I asked the students to make a possible budget for a person who earns ¥250 per month. By making the budget, students had the chance to consolidate some of the new expressions that they had just learned such as daily outlay, transportation fare, and utility bill.

If students take part in activities before and after listening, the material will be easier for them to remember. They have a chance to tackle problems on their own, reducing teacher dependence, as well as giving them opportunities to form their own opinions. All these contribute to their understanding of the lesson.

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Mother Tongue Interference: Chinese to English

Jia Zhimei

The Canada/China Language Center (CCLC) is a place to provide Chinese professionals with language and cultural preparation before they go to Canada for professional training. The students are all adults. They mainly study courses divided into listening, speaking, reading and writing. In the writing area, there are a lot of problems, including mother tongue interference and the use of Chinglish. This article deals with some of the problems and suggests solutions.

Writing is a serious problem for most Chinese learners of English. The CCLC students are all adults, some are even over fifty years of age, so during the time when they were at school, they did not have English courses; many others have not had a chance to study English systematically. Most of them have taught themselves English from radio or television in their spare time after they graduated from school.

Another reason is that most of the students are from rural provinces and some remote areas of China, so they have had no opportunity to read authentic materials, let alone have any contact with native speakers. Therefore, they are not familiar with western ways of thinking and writing. When they write, they most often do direct translations from Chinese to English and produce Chinglish. Chinglish mainly includes problems of word order and inappropriate direct translation. In the next part, some examples collected from students' essays will be shown based on the two areas.

I. Word Order

1. I very like my job.
   Correct: I like my job very much.
   I very much like my job.
2. He almost plays basketball every day.
   Correct: He plays basketball almost every day
3. If you are convenient, I'll come at two.
   Correct: If it is convenient with you, I'll come at two.
4. He is a plant man.
   Correct: He is a (mental) vegetable.
5. Since China reform and open door policy, there have ...
   Correct: Since China reformed and introduced the open door policy, there have ...

From the above examples, it can be seen clearly that the students using exact Chinese word order are ignoring English syntax.

Example 1 (I very like my job). In this sentence, the student uses the adjective "very" instead of an adverb to modify the verb "like". The correct sentence should be "I like my job very much." Example 2 (He almost plays basketball every day). In Chinese, "almost" is put right after the subject to show that he often (regularly) plays basketball, but in English it means he didn't play basketball at all, which is not the meaning that the student wants to express. Example 3 (If you are convenient, I'll come at two). In Chinese the word "convenient" is a very general word, but in English the word is used with a noun or pronoun. So students should pay attention to English usage. Example 4 (He is a plant man). This sentence could be misinterpreted to mean the person is a botanist doing research about plants, but the student actually means that the person is a mental vegetable incapable of thinking. Example 5 (Since China reform and open door policy, there have ...). In this clause, "reform" is a verb while "open-door policy" is a noun- phrase and the student has put these together without recognizing that they are incompatible parts of speech.

Generally, students unsure of the correct English sentence pattern will fall back on the use of Chinese word order. It is important that the teacher first make the students aware differences exist, and secondly show them specific models of commonly used phrases such as example 5.

II. Direct translation

1. He is wearing a chicken-heart sweater.
   Correct: He is wearing a V-neck sweater.
2. After she graduated from a university, she took part in social work.
   Correct: After she graduated from a university, she got a job.
3. I am going to play with my friends this evening.
   Correct: I am going to go out and have fun (dinner) with my friends.
4. There are little people in my hometown.
   Correct: There are few people in my hometown.
5. Several ten-thousand people arrived in Beijing.
   Correct: Several thousand people arrived in Beijing.
   More than ten thousand people arrived in Beijing.

The above five sentences are all direct translations from Chinese to English. Example 1 (He is wearing a chicken-heart sweater) is the simplest to remedy. The student uses "chicken-heart" which is equivalent to V-neck in English. For Westerners, it is a surprising and amusing term. So students should be aware there is a difference in descriptive terms. Example 2 (After she graduated from the university, she took part in social work). "Took part" in English means "to share a duty in", "to have a hand in", but when it is translated in Chinese, it means "canjia", which could mean "to be fully engaged in doing something" and "to share a duty" as well. In fact, in this case, it means paid work. Another error is with the term "social work". In China, all jobs are considered social work. That is, once you live in society, your job is social work, but in English, social work refers to work undertaken by government agencies to help the disadvantaged. Students need to be made familiar with this occupation to better understand the distinction.

Example 3 (I am going to play with my friend this evening). In English, "play with" is used only by children. Adults use the term "have fun" or "go out to do something", but in Chinese "play with" can indicate either of these. Example 4 (There are little people in my hometown). In Chinese, "little" means "not many" because there is no difference between countable and uncountable nouns. But in English, "little" is an uncountable adjective. Therefore we can not use "little" to modify people; we should use words like "few" or "not many". Otherwise the sentence suggests that people in this town are very short. Example 5 (Several ten-thousand people came to Beijing). The sentence is wrong because of a difference in terms between English and Chinese. In Chinese, "wan", ten thousand, is a distinct word, whereas in English it is not. So this is a word with which students can easily make mistakes through direct translation.

Conclusion

Among the solutions available to teachers is the use of error prediction. Through collecting errors over time from a homogenous language group, the teacher can anticipate common errors.

These errors can be examined and their solution fit into more general rules.

A common error for Chinese speakers learning English is the lack of pluralization of nouns following number, and they often miss the - s/es after the third person. For example, in Chinese, we say "yige shu" or "yike shu" for "one tree", and "sange shu" for "three trees" without changing the "shu" into plural form. In the same way, "I like books" is "Wo xihuan shu" and "she likes books" is "Ta xihuan shu" without changing the verb "xihuan." This is a typical mother tongue interference of Chinese to English.

The second common problem that EFL students should be aware of is that idioms and slang are non-transferable. For example, Chairman Mao Zedong once said "Hao hao xuexi tian tian xian shang" to encourage young people to study hard and make progress every day. But some English learners just directly translate it into "Good good study, day day up" which is nonsensical to Westerners. So for the idioms and slang, students should transfer the general meaning but not do word for word translation.

The third problem is about lexicality. The usage of words in the two languages is very important and difficult for the Chinese students because a Chinese word could have several equivalents in English. For example, the Chinese word "kan" can have several meanings in English: see, observe, look at, fix one's eye upon, read and so on. So Chinese students often confuse them and make errors. The teacher can help the students by showing them some examples and informing them that word for word translation is not possible when writing English essays.

Mother tongue interference in second language learning is clearly a major source of difficulty. However, the errors can be minimized by the effort of both teachers and students, by reading widely and examining errors.

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Differences in Syllabic Terminal Sounds Between English and Chinese

Shang Quanrong

Written Chinese is based on characters. Each character has its own monosyllable. Therefore, the syllabic terminal sound in Chinese is, in fact, the terminal sound of a Chinese character. Traditional Chinese phonologists generally divide a Chinese character into three parts: the initial consonant, the vowel and the tone. The initial consonant is always alone but the vowel may be a simple vowel or a compound vowel or a nasal vowel which is a vowel followed by /n/ or /ng/, the so called consonants in traditional phonology. In Chinese there are 39 vowels:10 simple vowels, 13 compound vowels and 16 nasal vowels. When we analyze the syllabic structures of modern standard Chinese, we find that the terminal sound is far more frequently a simple or compound vowel than a nasal one. Statistics based on the most popular Chinese dictionary, *Xinhua Dictionary,* (1980, Beijing, Commercial Press) justify the above statement. There are 7897 Chinese character entries excluding variant forms, unsimplified forms and polyphonic variants. Characters with a simple or compound vowel amount to 5103, 64.42% of the total, while those with a vowel +/n/ or /ng/ come out to be only 2794, 35.38% of the total.

Even this minor part of characters with terminal/n/ or /ng/, we could say are not close-ended because we can hardly call the terminal /n/ or /ng/ consonants. Nasals are quite special sounds. Are they consonants or vowels? This is still controversial among phonologists. Wang Li says in *Chinese Phonology:*

When /n/ and /ng/ are used terminally, they function almost the same way as terminal vowels because /n/ and /ng/ are the so called sonorants, having the character of a vowel. The tone is based on /n/ or /ng/ as well as the vowel before it. Terminal /n/ is matched with terminal vowel /i/ (/i/ being a front vowel while /n/ a dental), and terminal /ng/ is matched with terminal vowel /u/ (/u/ being a back vowel while /ng/ a velic consonant). In this way, they are neatly matched. (Wang,1980:20)

In fact, /m/, /n/, /ng/ have no poorer unblockedness than /i/, they have no less musicality than /i/. Therefore, there is no doubt that they are also vowels. (Song, 1985: 72).

Phoneticians of other languages have also seen the vowel nature of nasals. Jones says in *An Outline of English Phonetics:* Thus... a logical classification into vowels and consonants might be based on the presence or absence of perceptible 'noise'. If this classification were adopted, the voiced sounds/m/, /n/, etc. and the voiced /l/ sounds would have to be classed as vowels. (Jones, 1962:24).

No matter how we classify the nasals, it is true that final nasals have the same nature as final vowels. So we conclude that all the characters of modern standard Chinese are open-ended in the syllabic structure.

Differing from Chinese syllables, English syllables mainly end with a consonant or consonant cluster. The basic unit of written English is the word. Different from monosyllabic Chinese characters, English words may be monosyllabic, bisyllabic or polysyllabic. To make the statistics easier, we can only consider the last syllable of the word and take it as the sample of the whole. Statistics based on the *Oxford Elementary Learners' Dictionary of English* show that it includes 7820 word entries, roughly the same as the number of the Chinese character entries in *Xinhua Dictionary.* Of these words, 913 end with a vowel, only 11.67%; 6907 end with a consonant or consonant cluster, amounting to 88.33% of the total. As an elementary dictionary, it generally includes the most frequently used words in oral and written English. Therefore, the above statistics have the representativeness we expect.

According to these statistics, we can draw the conclusion that English words mainly end in a consonant or consonant cluster so they are close-ended. What we call close-ended here include not only words whose final syllable is a closed syllable in phonetics but also words whose final syllable may be an open one such as "make", "time", because "make" and "time" are pronounced as /meik/, /taim/ ending with a consonant /k/ and /m/ respectively, viewed from the point of syllabic structure. In English, almost all the consonants except /h/ can take the final position, singly or in a consonant cluster of two or three consonants. The authors of Phonetics: Theory and Application to Speech Improvement (Carrell & Tiffany, 1960) call these consonant clusters final blends and they offer us all the possibilities in which each consonant may be combined with other consonants. The possible clusters, put together and classified, fall into the following three groups:

1. Single consonants, 21 in all (the following are sounds, not letters): p, b, t, d, k, g, m, n, ŋ, f, v, θ, ð, tʃ, dʒ, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, r, l.

2. Two consonant clusters, 56 in all: pt, ps, bd, bz, ts, tθ, dz, ks, kt, gz, gd, mp, mz, md, nz, nθ, nd, θs, ntʃ, ndʒ, nt, ŋk, ŋd, ŋz, ft, fs, vd, vz, əz, əd, ʒd, st, sk, zd, tʃt, dʒd, rn, rz, rk, rs, rd, rm, rθ, rt, ld, lm, lz, lk, lt, lf, lp, rp, rb, rf, rv, rtʃ.

3. Three-consonant clusters, 17 in all: mpt, mps, nts, ntʃt, ndz, nʒd, ndʒd, nft, nst, nkt, ŋkt, ŋks, rdz, rts, rks, ldz, lts.

The total number of possible consonant clusters of all the above three groups amounts to 94, in contrast with only two single nasals in Chinese. Besides, the original forms of many English words ending with a vowel in the dictionary will change their forms by different inflexions in practical communication and become close-ended. These inflexions are frequently used in daily use and most of them end with a consonant: for instance, -s for the plural nouns and for the present tense third person singular verbs; -ed for the past tense and past participle; -ing for the gerund and the present participle; -'s for the possessive case of nouns; -er (some Americans and many English now pronounce the final r) and -est for the comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives and adverbs. Thus, words ending with a vowel which make up such a small part of the whole vocabulary will become even fewer in everyday use of the language.

This feature of English syllables is deeply impressed in the subconsciousness of native speakers. In daily speaking, they may unconsciously add a slight consonant to a monosyllabic word ending with a vowel so as to make it close-ended. Carrell & Tiffany's Phonetics, immediately after describing four kinds of English syllabic structures, says:

Of these various types of syllables, those with the vowel (open) arrest are by far the least common in isolated syllables. Even words which seem to end with what we normally term "vowels" frequently end with a kind of off-glide consonant; thus, "how" has, in effect, a /w/ off-glide /haw/ and "be" has a /j/ off- glide /bij/. (The final glide is not ordinarily noted in broad transcription). Observe, if you will, how few words are ended by the simple, lax vowels. Can you, for example, think of a word which ends with /ɛ/, /ʌ/, or /U/? (1960: 248)

This quotation clearly illustrates the consonantal tendency of English syllables. It is not hard to imagine that the esthetic value of such a great variety of final blends would be recognized. Hopkins and Emily Dickenson very successfully used half rhymes in their famous poems. Hopkins thinks that the end-consonant rhyme is also alliteration, only at the other end. The following lines are from Stanza 8 of his long poem "The Wreck of the Deutschland":

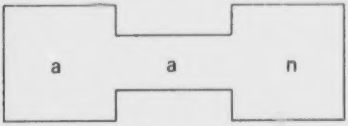
Is out with it!
We lash with the best or worst
Word last! How a lust-kept plush-capped sloe
Will, mouthed to flesh-burst
Gush!--flush the man, the being with it, sour or sweet
Brim, in a flash full....

Here the poet uses again and again the repetition of final consonants; for instance, /t/ in out, it, sweet; /ʃ/ in lash, plush, flesh, gush, flush, flash; /pt/ in kept, capped; /st/ in best, worst, last, burst, lust. /t/ is used singly or in clusters eleven times in these few lines, thus making it resound recurrently. This not only creates musicality but also establishes the tense atmosphere.

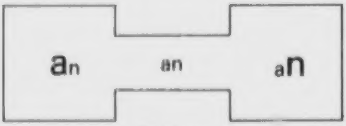
The difference in syllabic terminal sounds between English and Chinese might be related to their essentially different ways of spelling the syllable. In English, "vowel + consonant" is a two constituent structure. So is the "vowel + nasal" structure. That is, nasals after a vowel are regarded as consonants in English. But in Chinese, the structure of "vowel + /n/ or /ng/", which are the only two sounds other than pure vowels used as the terminal sound in this language, emphasizes its own entirety. Modern Chinese says when syllable spelling is discussed, "The vowel part, as an entirety, can not be separated no matter what the structure is." (Huang & Liao, 1988: 96). The way of spelling the "vowel + /n/ or /ng/" structure is that the two sounds "are not spelt in a stiff way but with the nasality increasing gradually so that the vowel is transmitted to the nasal gradually...." (ibid.:64-65).

This quotation stresses the gradual mingling of /n/ or /ng/ into the vowel, and the fact that /n/ or /ng/ is an integral part of the whole vowel because "the tone is based on /n/ or /ng/ as well as the vowel before it" (See the above quotation from Wang Li). That is why a vowel + /n/ or /ng/ is classed as a vowel in Chinese.

This difference is more prominent when we want to produce a longer duration of "vowel + a nasal"; for instance, /an/, in a rising tone or in singing. In English, we lengthen the vowel only. The nasal is articulated at the end of the vowel, while in Chinese we lengthen the entirety of "vowel + /n/ or /ng/". The following figures show the different ways to lengthen /an/ in these two languages:



English



Chinese

This difference between English and Chinese makes it difficult for Chinese beginners of English, especially students in the North, to utter the rising tone of an English word which ends with a consonant cluster. They generally do it in a wrong way by adding a slight vowel to the final consonant, to make it like a Chinese syllabic ending. The vowel added after final consonants p, b, t, d, k, g, ʧ, dz, is generally a schwa; after f, v, m, generally /u/; after s, z, θ, ð, generally a vowel similar to the Chinese vowel /ʅ/ (used when the initial consonant is /zh/, /ch/, /sh/ or /r/); after /ʃ/, /ʒ/, generally a very short /i/; after /r/, /l/, generally a Chinese sound /ər/, which is a suffixation added to nouns or sometimes verbs in standard Chinese. They make it even worse when it is a monosyllable of "a plosive + /ʌ/ or /I/ or /U/ or /e/ + a consonant. Since these vowels are very short and the rising tone requires a longer duration, they shift the lengthening from the vowel to the consonant by adding a vowel to it. It is so difficult for Chinese students that they have to practise it over and over before they can get the right pronunciation. Therefore, ESL teachers should pay special attention to it.

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Needs Analysis

Liu Jie

Needs Analysis is concerned with identifying general and specific language needs that can be addressed in developing goals, objectives and content in a language program. Needs Analysis is open to two interpretations. On the one hand, it can refer to what a learner needs to do with the language once he has learned it. This is a goal-oriented definition of needs and is related to terminal behaviour, the ends of learning. On the other hand, the expression can refer to what the learner needs to do in order to actually acquire the language. This is a process-oriented definition of needs and is related to transitional behaviour, the means of learning. (Altman & James, 1980)

Needs analysis acknowledges that the goals of learners vary and must be determined before decisions about content and method can be made. This contrasts with the assumption underlying many methods, namely that the needs and goals of learners are identical, that what they need is simply "language" and that method X is the best way to teach it.

Analyzing and identifying language needs always begins with the same operation: gathering information and analyzing it in order to make choices and decisions. In doing so, there are a number of questions which we must answer:

1. Who decides to identify the needs?
2. Who compiles the information?
3. What information?
4. How?
5. Who makes use of the information?
6. To do what?
7. What is the relation between the cost of the operation and its usefulness and effectiveness?
8. How to assess the whole identification procedure?

(Richterich, 1983)

These questions are a prerequisite to all identification methodology. But as there is no single, universal methodology, but many methodologies, the above list is not suitable to every case.

Many people believe that if learners learn badly, are uninterested in their studies, lack motivation, find the teaching boring and do not put enough into their work, it is largely because the educational content, methods and practices are ill-adapted to the various types of learners and take no account of their differences.

So we should acquire better understanding of the characteristics, capabilities and resources of learners in order to identify their language needs and select the objectives, content and curricula which will satisfy them. The most important aspect of all learner-centered teaching is to identify language needs.

Usually in gathering information about the learners, we cover the following variables:

1. age
2. sex
3. previous experience with second language learning
4. personality factors, such as
    (a) introvert-extrovert
    (b) goal-oriented vs role-oriented

   (c) competitive vs withdrawing
5. language aptitude
   (a) auditory ability
   (b) inductive learning ability
   (c) grammatical sensitivity
   (d) rote memory ability
6. attitudes and motivation
   (a) motivational orientation
      (i) integrative
      (ii) instrumental
   (b) intensity of motivation
   (c) source of motivation
      (i) peer group
      (ii) parental pressure
      (iii) internal
   (d) attitudes toward
      (i) the target language
      (ii) the target culture or people
      (iii) language learning in general
      (iv) the target language teacher
7. learning rate
8. sense modality preference
   (a) visual
   (b) auditory
   (c) tactile
   (d) kinesthetic
9. Sociological preference
   (a) whole-class environment
   (b) large-group environment
   (c) small-group environment
   (d) independent study
   (e) self-instruction
   (f) learning with peers
   (g) learning with the teacher
10. Cognitive styles, especially field dependence/independence
11. Learner errors
    (Altman, 1980)

At the stage of compiling information and determination, analysis of learner variables is not enough. We have to consider two other variables, namely teacher variables and method variables. These three variables are interrelated and cannot be separated.

As we all know, within the teaching-learning framework, the teacher contributes many factors that influence the progress of learners. Unfortunately, these have not been the object of detailed analysis in the way reported for learner variables. Nevertheless, we must recognize that teachers are not similar and must try to identify the principle variables of the teacher that have the greatest effect. The following teacher variables should be considered:

1. Personal identity
   A. Individual

    (i) Age
    (ii) Sex
    (iii) Extent of personal education
    (iv) Personality factors
  B. Social
    (i) Cultural identity
    (ii) Language identity
2. Professional identity
  A. Extent of affinity with the learners
    (i) Cultural
    (ii) Linguistic
  B. Extent and quality of professional training
    (i) general (irrespective of subject)
    (ii) specific (to foreign language teaching)
  C. Experience as a teacher
    (i) immediately relevant
    (ii) more distantly relevant
  D. Commitment to a given approach
  E. Extent of familiarity with particular methods and materials.

These are generally important parameters in determining teacher variables. We must keep in mind that teachers, no less than learners, are dynamic organisms whose characteristics change with time. Any department of foreign languages should identify those characteristics which can be modified in a helpful way and provide means of achieving such modification and maintaining it over future time.

As to the method variables, we have to consider the following:

1. Approach, e.g. direct method, audio-lingual, grammar translation, etc.
2. Learning/teaching goals
  A. General, e.g. unspecified as to goals.
  B. Specific
    (i) as to language content
    (ii) as to language skills
    (iii) as to circumstances of use (for educational or occupational purposes)
  C. Criterion-oriented (especially examination-centered learning/teaching)
3. Instructional possibilities
  A. levels of attainment, e.g. beginner - intermediate - advanced
  B. Instructional format
    (i) self-instruction
    (ii) teacher-led instruction
    (iii) automated instruction
4. Principles of syllabus design
  A. Language-dominated
  B. Situational
  C. Notional
  D. Functional
  E. Communicative
  F. Text dominated, e.g. grammar translation syllabuses

5. Principles of material production
    A. Degree of coverage of each particular item or set of items; i.e., macro/micro, in respect to goals
    B. Methodological origins
        (i) syllabus-dependent
        (ii) independent
    C. Reference materials

When we try to choose a particular method for a course, we have to make sure that there is a close degree of fit between the program goals and objectives and the objectives of the method. When a close fit between method and program objectives is lacking, a choice can be made through eclecticism; various design features and procedures are selected, perhaps drawn from different methods that can be shown to relate explicitly to program objectives.

In summary, if we want to improve the English language teaching, we must focus more on the learner. But paradoxically, in order to focus more closely and with greater effect on the learner, we should also take into account the teacher variables and method variables. It would not do any good only analyzing thoroughly the learners' needs without paying any attention to the right teacher and the right method, which are also important factors in effective teaching. To make English language teaching more effective and more beneficial, the teacher has to be more sophisticated, better trained, more thoroughly aware of what he or she is doing, and why, than before. Above all, what we must avoid is the facile assumption that individualization in some way implies considering the learner instead of the teacher. On the contrary, we must realize that it is the teacher who is in fact responsible for doing this focusing on the learner. Therefore, when we talk about needs analysis we should not only discuss the learners' needs, which are certainly vital to effective teaching, but we should also pay attention to the teacher needs and method needs, which are correlated and interconnected with the learners' needs.

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Pre-Listening Activities for Greater Comprehension

Li Zhengming

The students at the China-Canada Language Center (CCLC) are Chinese professionals preparing for work and/or study in Canada. As a result, they need exposure to authentic spoken English and to develop greater listening comprehension before they go to Canada. There are some Canadian teachers at the CCLC, and foreign guest speakers are invited to give lectures on various topics once a week. But there is also a listening lab with many taped broadcasts of Canadian radio programs. So, the students rely on listening lab materials as their main resource. This requires non-traditional attitudes towards approaching listening as active learners.

Traditionally in China, the classroom methodology of the listening teacher is to first explain some vocabulary which will appear in the listening materials, then, to play the tape once or twice and finally to check the students' answers. If the students still have comprehension problems, the next step is for the teacher to explain some of the difficult points in detail. Obviously, this is a teacher-centered class instead of a student-centered one, and does not focus on individual problems or allow students to use strategies to learn or improve on their own.

But, in fact, listening by no means needs to be a passive way to receive messages; it requires active participation from the students (Chen, 1989:28-30). In a typical listening class, the students get used to waiting for the main content of the selection, but pay little or no attention to the title of each listening selection. Actually, the title, and sometimes the subtitle, of each listening material selected from a news broadcast gives an indication, point of view, summary or highlight of that item. Therefore, one of the teacher's tasks in reforming the teaching of listening is to help students focus on the title and subtitle as a necessary pre-listening activity.

Of course, it is not always possible to get much information from a title, but the students should always be examining it as much as possible in terms of the wh/h-questions (who, what, where, why, when and how).

For instance, a sample ABC News broadcast is entitled "The Korean Air Crash — Flight 007." From this title, the teacher can first raise some wh/h-questions in order to help the students to predict the content:

Common teacher questions:	Predicted answer:
-What happened in the news?	-An air crash.
-Which airline did the plane belong to?	-Korean Airlines.
-What was the flight number?	-Flight 007.
-Who was affected?	-Korean Airline passengers, their relatives and friends.

Afterwards, the teacher can also prompt the students with specific questions that can be answered and then lead the students on to guess or predict answers to other questions. In this way, the students have schemata or mental maps against which they can measure new information. It is like having the frame of a puzzle, ready to fit in new pieces. Some prompting questions for this news item can be:

1. What usually causes an air crash?
2. What important information is often given in news about an air crash?
3. What is done immediately after an air crash?
4. What are different people's responses right after an air crash? For example: average listeners; relatives of the victims and survivors; and related government officials.

After these prompting questions, the pre-listening activity is open to discussion. In question

1, the students are given room to provide all sorts of possibilities for an air crash: the engines were damaged; the plane and/or airport radar systems were broken; a time bomb exploded or the plane was shot down by another plane. Question 2 will enable them to focus their attention on the location, the time when the accident occurred, and the number of victims and survivors. To answer question 3, the students may mention things such as: to look for the black box; to investigate what led to the air crash. For question 4, the students may place themselves in the role of just having heard about an air crash in which a friend or relative has died.

So far, the students have already gained insights into some of the key points for this news after they have finished these four questions because what they have touched upon in their pre- listening activity is partially available through their predictions of the news which they are going to hear. Part of the transcript is as follows:

> "...the Soviet aircraft shot down a Korean 747. 269 passengers and a crew were on board. The attack has caused an outrage. The plane passed over one of Russia's most sensitive military installations, a submarine base. At 18:26 hours, the Soviet pilot fired a missile and the target was destroyed. There are two theories, both still unconfirmed: (1) that the Korean plane was somehow fitted with spy cameras and was deliberately overflying sensitive Soviet military installations, and (2) that the Russians used an electronic device to confuse instruments in the Korean plane and draw it off course. Pentagon sources say there is to be no military show of force in response." (Finger, 1985:131-133)

As most of these points have been anticipated or predicted by the students, the effort they have made in the pre-listening activity is a good investment of time.

Two other news titles may be used as examples:

News Title 1: Impressionist Masterpieces Stolen from Paris Art Gallery.

The teacher now can raise some wh/h-questions based on this news title, such as:

- What was stolen?
- From where were these masterpieces stolen?

Since the information about who stole these masterpieces is not available from the title, the teacher can prompt the students with such questions as:

1. What is usually stolen from art galleries?
2. Who tends to steal from art galleries?
3. Why might these masterpieces have been stolen?
4. How are such paintings and other works of art usually protected?
5. Who might want to steal these paintings?

News title 2: Reward Offered for Son's Return.
Some answerable wh/h-questions from this title are:

- What was offered?
- Who offered the reward?
- Who will get the reward?

Some prompting questions are:

1. Who might have taken the boy?
2. Why might the boy have been taken: - ransom? - crazy people?
3. From where might the boy have been kidnapped?

In answering the above-mentioned prompting questions, the students have to guess or predict the information missing from the titles. What the students have discussed in their pre-listening activities can relate to the contents of the news and eventually result in greater comprehension. The pre-listening activity or prediction exercise is an effective way to facilitate the students' listening, for it can not only elicit some of their world knowledge, but also prepare them to listen selectively. (Fox, 1983:90-97)

A pre-listening activity of this kind is suitable for top CCLC students who have a good command of vocabulary and can express their opinions on various topics. In addition, this method is applicable for upper-intermediate and learners throughout China.

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Bref Historique de l'enseignment des langues étrangères en Chine

Colette Soucy

Introduction

Dans cette brève communication, nous jetterons un coup d'oeil rapide sur l'historique de l'enseignement des langues étrangères en Chine. Après cette rétrospective, nous expliquerons comment l'influence confucéenne s'est aussi infiltrée dans l'enseignement des langues étrangères par cette tendance constante à "se centrer" sur le professeur, le manuel et la grammaire.

1. Un brin d'histoire

En Chine, l'enseignement des langues étrangères a une histoire relativement jeune, puisque, en l'an 2000, elle ne fêtera même pas encore son 200e anniversaire.

C'est vrai, au début du XIXème siècle, la Chine était toute repliée sur elle-même et s'était même nommée Zhong Guo [中国] ce qui signifie "Empire du Milieu" (i.e. Pays qui se trouve au centre du monde, voire, qui est le Centre du Monde). C'est seulement avec la Guerre de l'Opium de 1840 qu'on a commencé à réaliser l'urgence d'apprendre une langue européenne, afin de négocier avec les "démons étrangers". Au début de 1860, des Instituts de Langues se sont ouverts à Beijing, à Shanghaï, à Canton et quelques autres grandes villes du pays. Pendant la période de 1911 à 1949, avec l'ouverture d'écoles dirigées par les "étrangers", on se ruait sur tout ce qui venait de "l'extérieur". Désormais l'apprentissage de l'anglais ou du français n'était plus seulement un outil pour négocier mais devint une fin en soi. D'abord, on suivait le modèle du système japonais. On insistait sur la traduction et sur la lecture analytique. Dès le début, on a donné la priorité à la grammaire. Dans les écoles dirigées par les missionnaires, on enseignait toutefois dans la langue cible. Ceci était fortement contesté et perçu plus ou moins comme un affront.

De 1949 jusqu' à la fin de la Révolution Culturelle en 1976, c'est l'enseignement du russe qui devint prioritaire. L'anglais ou le français s'enseignaient seulement comme connaissance livresque. On accentuait surtout le savoir linguistique. Après la chute de la "Bande des Quatre", Zhou Enlai insista beaucoup sur l'importance d'enseigner les langues modernes en Chine. Les Instituts de Langues connurent une vaste expansion et l'apprentissage des langues étrangères fut perçu à nouveau comme instrumental. Désormais, l'apprentissage des langues étrangères est considéré comme un moyen d'aider la Chine à réaliser son programme de modernisation et à rattraper son retard technologique.

2. Le rôle du professeur et de l'apprenant

Dans tout le système éducatif chinois, on privilégie un enseignement centré sur le professeur. L'arrière-plan historique au développement de l'enseignement des langues étrangères en Chine privilégie également ce scénario. En effet, dans la plupart des classes de langues, le professeur a tendance à contrôler sa classe avec une main ferme. Autoritaire, il accepte mal qu'on l'interrompe, le questionne ou le place au pied du mur. N'est-ce pas lui le détenteur du savoir linguistique et celui qui connaît à l'avance les bonnes réponses? Son enseignement est prodigué de façon structurée et les cours magistraux dominent. C'est ce qu'il dit qui compte et les discussions et/ou échanges entre étudiants sont des pertes de temps à éviter.

L'apprenant n'est pas beaucoup encouragé à s'exprimer librement et quand il parle, on le corrige de façon assez stricte. Comme le dit Zhang Ping (1990), "Nous les professeurs chinois, nous avons toujours peur des erreurs de nos étudiants. Quand les étudiants se trompent, nous pensons qu'ils ont très peu appris et que notre enseignement a été un échec". Quand les étudiants s'expriment dans la langue cible, on s'empresse de corriger les erreurs d'usage et de syntaxe; on les interrompt et on leur donne le mot ou l'expression juste.

Le "bon" étudiant se laisse reprendre ; il est docile, réceptif et obéissant. "On peut dire au peuple ce qu'il doit faire", disait Confucius, "on ne saurait lui faire comprendre pourquoi." La parole du professeur est, par tradition, incontestée et incontestable. Comme l'écrit Zhang Ping (1990), "présentement, en Chine, nous les professeurs avons tendance à donner beaucoup de conférences à nos étudiants. Nous ne tenons pas beaucoup compte de leurs besoins ou de leurs intérêts. Nous voulons être absolument certains que ces derniers aient réellement compris ce que nous avons présenté et nous ne leur donnons pas assez de temps pour pratiquer et utiliser la langue. Cette façon de nourrir au compte-gouttes n'encourage pas les étudiants à développer leur habileté à communiquer. Nous les traitons comme des robots qui n'ont ni pensée et ni sentiments." L'atmosphère de la classe devient lourde et amorphe.

Cette idée que le professeur doit tout savoir et être toujours correct est plutôt nuisible. L'étudiant s'habitue à être passif et le professeur a toujours peur de faire des erreurs. A cause de cette phobie, comme le dit Yen Renting (1987), le professeur va seulement se référer au manuel où il puise "l'immuable vérité". Celui-ci doit être approuvé par l'autorité et répété quasi textuellement. Tout ce qui est enseigné est écrit d'avance et lu fidèlement à une audience qui prend des notes.

Aux cours, l'apprenant doit apporter ses oreilles et son crayon afin de tout noter scrupuleusement. Ensuite, lors de l'examen, il doit reproduire les informations qu'il a accumulées. L'étudiant chinois n'a pas acquis cette habitude de discuter en classe et ceci constitue un problème pour les professeurs étrangers qui enseignent en Chine. Dans le passé, les étudiants n'ont pas été encouragés à s'impliquer directement dans des activités de classe et on a fait plus ou moins fait appel à leur créativité. On les a plutôt incités à développer leur mémoire et à apprendre comme des photocopieuses ou/et des magnétophones sophistiqués.

3. Le rôle du texte et du livre

   Dans la tradition confucéenne, les textes sacrés étaient les sources principales de l'autorité suprême; à la fin du XIXème siècle, ce respect sacro-saint a été transféré aux classiques occidentaux et aux manuels où se trouvait un autre genre de "Vérité Immuable". Comme l'explique Yen Ren Ting (1987), dans l'enseignement des langues étrangères en Chine, le rôle du manuel est primordial. Autant par les professeurs que par les étudiants, les livres sont perçus comme les sources du savoir, de la sagesse et de la vérité. Le savoir est dans le manuel qui est transmis par l'intermédiaire du professeur. Ce dernier tâche d'extraire la connaissance dans les livres pour la transmettre à ses étudiants. Ce savoir est fixe et immuable. Pour l'étudiant, il s'agit d'ingurgiter ce savoir. A l'examen, on s'efforce de reproduire exactement le manuel. Ainsi, dans la classe de langue, le meilleur étudiant n'est pas nécessairement celui qui parle la langue cible, mais d'abord et avant tout, celui qui peut fidèlement mémoriser le texte. Le reste est secondaire...

4. Le rôle de la grammaire

   Dans la Chine traditionnelle, l'univers terrestre était dominé par les décrets du Ciel. Des règles fixes et immuables sont importantes pour tout expliquer et justifier le destin du monde. Dans l'enseignement des langues, la grammaire joue plus au moins ce rôle capital. N'est-ce pas la connaissance et la maîtrise de ces règles qui permettront d'accéder au coeur même de la compétence linguistique?

En effet, pendant sa courte histoire d'environ 125 ans, la grammaire a été considérée comme étant le pivot central de l'enseignement des langues étrangères. On a toujours eu tendance à privilégier l'enseignement formel des règles grammaticales de la langue qui, tels les édits des Classiques confucéens, devaient être mémorisées. "Apprendre une langue (...) signifiait presque exclusivement apprendre la grammaire de cette langue, cette connaissance grammaticale constituant la garantie de l'habileté à comprendre et à produire des phrases" (Desmarais, 1986).

Les règles apprises étaient ensuite pratiquées dans des exercices structuraux multiples ou un contexte situationnel. On visait à la création d'automatismes au niveau grammatical. C'était par voie de répétition et de mémorisation que les modèles syntaxiques pouvaient être intégrés et généralisés. Les erreurs étaient répertoriées, corrigées et commentées. Les didacticiens se concentraient davantage sur l'application des règles d'usage que sur leurs règles d'utilisation. En Chine, comme ailleurs en Europe et en Amérique, on croyait qu'il "s'agissait d'une étape jugée nécessaire car il était admis que c'était seulement après avoir acquis et intégré les règles de fonctionnement des structures syntaxiques que l'étudiant pouvait passer à l'expression libre" (Desmarais, 1986).

En Chine, malheureusement, il arrive encore qu'on ne passe pas à l'expression libre et qu'on apprenne la grammaire d'une langue comme une fin en soi. Zhan Ruiling (1987) explique ainsi cette tendance. Selon Confucius, tout l'univers était gouverné par des lois sacrées, immuables, qui se trouvaient inscrites dans les Classiques, qu'il s'agissait de mémoriser. Ainsi en est-il de la réalité d'une langue étrangère qui est toute gérée par des lois grammaticales précises qu'il s'agit, en lisant, en scrutant et/ou mémorisant les livres étrangers, de déchiffrer et de savoir par coeur. Pour bien dominer ce monde, on doit sans cesse référer à l'immuable grammaire. C'est là et là seul, qu'on puise le "jugement dernier" sur tout problème linguistique. Pour quiconque s'exprime de façon grammaticalement correcte, quelle satisfaction et quelle fierté!

Conclusion

C'est un fait évident que, lors de sa brève histoire, l'enseignement des langues étrangères en Chine s'est caractérisé par cette forte tendance à se cristalliser autour du professeur, du manuel et de la grammaire. Ceci n'est dorénavent plus immuable. En effet, avec l'avènement de l'approche communicative, des changements substantiels se sont produits et continuent de se produire.

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L'approche utilisée au CCLC dans l'enseignement du français

Colette Soucy

Introduction

"Le système en vase clos est une des caractéristiques de l'éducation traditionelle chinoise".
(Zhan, 1987)

Pour le reste du monde, la Chine symbolise une civilisation millénaire et, à toutes les étapes de son histoire, son modèle de l'éducation est réellement "le produit de conditions déterminées sociales, politiques, économiques et culturelles" (Zhan, 1987). Dans la Chine antique, le professeur était perçu comme le maître et le détenteur du savoir. Ce savoir était puisé dans les classiques confucéens qu'on devait mémoriser comme étant l'immuable Vérité. Dans l'apprentissage des langues étrangères, l'influence confucéene a également été très marquante. On a eu tendance à "se centrer" sur le professeur, le manuel et la grammaire.

Sans perdre de vue l'existence de cette tradition socio- éducative confucéenne qui continue encore d'influencer la mentalité chinoise, je présenterai l'approche didactique que nous tâchons d'utiliser au CLCC lors du programme de formation linguistique et culturelle offert au Centre.

1. Approche et objectifs

Le programme d'enseignement au Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine (CLCC) de Beijing est basé sur l'approche communicative d'inspiration fonctionnelle ou rationnelle. "Les fonctions se rapportent aux opérations langagières telles qu'elles se concrétisent dans une situation de communication tandis que les notions sont des concepts actualisés par des mots, des expressions ou des énoncés que l'apprenant doit pouvoir comprendre ou produire pour saisir ou exprimer une fonction langagière." (Boucher, 1986). Cette approche affecte et le contenu du programme et la méthodologie utilisée. L'objectif général de l'enseignement offert est de faire du français un instrument de plus en plus efficace et perfectionné au service de la communication et de la pensée. En bref, il s'agit d'amener l'apprenant à savoir lire, écouter, écrire et parler.

Cet objectif général se précise et s'adapte aux différents intérêts et besoins langagiers de l'apprenant qui sont analysés au début de la formation de chaque nouveau groupe, i.e. à chaque semestre. De façon générale, les objectifs de base des stagiaires chinois sont les suivants:

1. acquérir un vocabulaire de base permettant de s'exprimer de facon adéquate lors de leur séjour au Canada, que ce soit dans le cadre d'un programme d'études, en milieu de travail, ou dans les situations ordinaires de la vie courante;
2. apprendre autant de français "authentique" que possible; i.e. telle qu'il est parlé par
3. se familiariser avec la réalité socio-culturelle canadienne en insistant, bien sûr, sur le fait "français" au Canada, sur la réalité (ou non réalité!) du bilinguisme canadien, etc.;
4. finalement, passer le TestCAN, et ceci n'est pas peu dire!

Si, en Chine, dans un passé pas tellement lointain, les programmes d'enseignement étaient conçus à partir d'un livre unique qu'il s'agissait ni plus ni moins de réciter par coeur, le programme d'enseignement du français au CLCC a été élaboré en tenant compte des stagiaires d'abord. C'est ce que Moirand (1984) appelle la "centration sur l'apprenant". Centré sur l'apprenant, il tient compte de ce que celui-ci devra faire avec la langue une fois rendu au Canada. Ce qui est enseigné est déterminé par les besoins langagiers des stagiaires et non pas par le contenu mommifié d'un livre unique.

Le programme offert au Centre n'est pas un corpus de cours rigides, mais plutôt un sommaire où figurent les objectifs à atteindre et les grandes lignes du contenu de l'enseignement à prodiguer. Tous les stagiaires qui viennent suivre des cours au CLCC ont ceci en commun qu'ils se destinent tous à aller travailler et/ou étudier au Canada. A peu près tous séjourneront dans un milieu socio-culturel qui leur sera plus ou moins étranger.

En conséquence, l'un des éléments fondamental du programme d'étude au CLCC est l'introduction et la pratique de fonctions linguistiques "de survie", tels que les formules de politesse, les présentations, les demandes de renseignement, l'expression de ses sentiments, etc. De plus, les stagiaires doivent également connaître les domaines spécifiques et les situations auxquelles ils seront confrontées au Canada (officielles, privées, professionnelles, de tous les jours, etc.). Ils doivent arriver à maîtriser "raisonnablement" les registres de la langue et pouvoir s'adapter à une situation socio-culturelle spécifique donnée.

Au CLCC, nous tenons compte du fait que la langue constitue un moyen privilégié par lequel une collectivité se révèle, s'exprime et s'épanouit. Cette réalité est prise au sérieux et, lors de l'enseignement du français, on introduit à l'apprenant les valeurs socio-culturelles propres à la communauté canadienne-française, de maitriser qu'on l'invite à se situer par rapport aux valeurs véhiculées par le discours.

2. La langue enseignée

Notre classe de langue développe la maîtrise de la langue familière orale ainsi que la maîtrise de la langue dont la communauté francophone canadienne-francaise fait usage dans les différentes sphères de ses activités. Sans condamner l'emploi du "joual" dans maintes situations quotidiennes, la classe de français vise surtout à faire mátriser le français "correct", celui qui permettra à l'élève de participer à la vie sociale et culturelle de la communauté francophone canadienne. Cependant, aux stagiaires chinois dont le niveau de français oral est plus élevé, on introduit aussi plusieurs expressions de "joual", un répertoire d'anglicismes employés au Québec et d'expressions ou de proverbes québécois. En général, toutefois, on se limite à la langue familière à cause du facteur temps.

3. Les contenus d'enseignement

Le présent programme du CLCC n'a pas encore de curriculum au sens strict du terme, mais il propose des contenus d'enseignement où l'objectif général et les objectifs intermédiaires des cours offerts sont spécifiés. A chaque niveau (débutant, intermédiaire, avancé), il est suggéré de privilégier des discours propres à assurer l'exercice de fonctions langagières acheminant l'apprenant vers une autonomie de plus en plus grande rattachée à la maîtrise de la langue cible.

Au cours d'ORAL, les contenus d'enseignement visent des savoir-faire spécifiques. Il s'agit de placer les apprenants dans une situation de communication qui lui permettront d'exercer des fonctions essentielles de la langue cible, telles que:

- se présenter;
- accepter ou refuser une invitation;
- s'excuser;
- exprimer ses sentiments;
- s'informer et informer;
- développer ses idées;
- défendre son opinion;
- débattre ses convictions;
- etc.

Pendant le cours d'ÉCOUTE, le programme du CLCC propose d'exploiter plusieurs types de discours visant d'abord à élever le niveau de compréhension auditive des apprenants, dans des situations de communication relatives aux domaines sociaux, professionnels et académiques. Il s'agit d'aider les stagiaires non seulement à saisir ce qui est dit en français, mais aussi à identifier les situations et les intentions de communication, les attitudes du locuteur, les registres utilisés, etc. Ici encore, l'apprenant est placé dans des conditions où il pourra développer non seulement sa capacité d'écoute, mais aussi son jugement critique face à plusieurs types de discours oraux. Il aura ainsi l'occasion de découvrir le contexte socio-culturel véhiculé dans les discours écoutés et/ou dans les films visionnés.

Lors du cours de LECTURE, l'enseignement offert ainsi que le contenu des programmes n'omettent pas l'importance d'amener l'apprenant à élever son niveau de compréhension écrite tout en acquérant des techniques de lecture efficace et rapide. L'enseignant utilise des textes favorisant, chez l'apprenant, le développement d'un jugement critique. Par exemple, il tâche de l'aider à reconnaître l'organisation d'un texte à travers les idées principales, les phrases-clés, les résumés, etc. Il guide l'apprenant dans cet art d'identifier les indices contextuels d'un écrit, de distinguer les faits, les opinions, les sous- entendus, etc. Quand il est offert, l'atelier "journal" favorise également ces stratégies de compréhension et d'interprétation du sens.

Dans le cours d'ÉCRIT, ce qui est accentué, bien sûr, c'est la production écrite. Il s'agit d'amener l'apprenant à développer ses capacités d'émetteur-scripteur et à utiliser sa connaissance de la langue cible pour communiquer à des fins sociales, académiques et professionnelles. L'apprenant est amené à réfléchir sur l'acte d'écrire, à se familiariser avec les diverses opérations inhérentes à la production écrite, à exprimer adéquatement son intention de communication, à choisir une forme appropriée de discours pour le transmettre, à apprendre comment traiter un sujet spécifique en organisant son discours selon différentes méthodes de développement appropriées à la situation de communication.

Pour les stagiaires qui se préparent à effectuer des études universitaires au Québec, le CLCC offre aussi un cours intitulé "Stratégies Académiques". L'enseignement propose au stagiaire des moyens concrets pour développer une autonomie de l'apprentissage et pour acquérir des stratégies académiques nécessaires afin de "réussir" dans les universités canadiennes.

L'enseignement prodigué ne perd pas de vue cette urgence d'accroître chez l'apprenant son autonomie et son pouvoir de communication autant à l'Écrit qu'à l'Oral. Le matériel pédagogique utilisé est, autant que possible, authentique et est exploité selon un processus méthodologique axé lui aussi sur la communication. Ceci sera développé davantage un peu plus tard.

4. La salle de classe et processus d'apprentissage

Le rôle primordial de la salle de classe est de favoriser, chez les apprenants, la possibilité d'utiliser efficacement le français, instrument de communication personnel et social. La salle de classe atteindra son but si, d'une part, elle permet aux étudiants de comprendre et de produire différents discours dans une variété de situations et si, d'autre part, elle lui permet de découvrir et de maîtriser le fonctionnement de la langue et du discours. La salle de classe doit favoriser non seulement le savoir mais surtout le savoir-faire! La théorie concernant une langue demeure importante mais la pratique l'est encore plus si on veut utiliser à bon escient cette langue. La salle de classe se doit de tenir compte de cette réalité.

Partant du fait que toute habileté se développe par la pratique, notre enseignement du français privilégie une pédagogie reposant essentiellement sur la pratique. La salle de classe devient le lieu privilégié où l'apprenant est placé dans des situations spécifiques où il aura à lire, à écrire, à écouter et à parler. Comme toute habileté se développe davantage par des pratiques répétées et variées, la classe de français devient un point de rencontre où l'enseignement propose à l'apprenant différents exercices de compréhension et de production de discours, lui permettant de développer ses compétences langagières. Plus ces pratiques seront authentiques, plus l'apprenant sera apte à augmenter son habileté à communiquer oralement et par écrit.

5. Le processus méthodologique

Partant de ce qui vient d'être présenté ci-dessus, il est évident que le programme de français offert au CLCC propose une méthodologie reposant globalement sur les concepts de "mise en situation" et "d'exploitation". Nous avons opté pour une pédagogie de la communication visant "avant tout le développement de l'aptitude à communiquer et non la connaissance des règles ou des lois de la communication" (Milot, 1981). Dans cette perspective, la connaissance n'est pas exclue mais elle est toujours au service de la communication. La connaissance devient plus un moyen au service de la compétence de communication et non pas une fin en soi. Ainsi, la "mise en situation" se justifie-t-elle par la nécessité de proposer aux apprenants des activités de communication leur permettant d'acquérir éventuellement les connaissances pratiques qui sont directement reliées à l'habileté à communiquer. Quant à "l'exploitation", elle se réalise par le biais de la pratique langagière de situations significatives et est sans cesse redéfinie par le processus d'apprentissage.

Tel qu'il est élaboré, notre programme maintient le principe de l'enseignement de l'ORAL et de l'ÉCRIT car nos stagiaires chinois ont besoin des deux. Il souligne également la nécessité du savoir lire et du savoir écouter ainsi que du savoir écrire et du savoir parler. Donc, sur l'horaire, on peut apercevoir que les cours se divisent encore ainsi: ÉCOUTE, LECTURE, ÉCRIT, et ORAL. Par contre, nous tâchons d'intégrer ces catégories les unes dans les autres car nous croyons que la dynamique de la communication exige le non-cloisonnement des quatre savoir (i.e. le savoir lire, écouter, écrire, et parler). C'est la fusion harmonieuse de ces quatre savoirs qui constitue l'apprentissage de la langue cible, et la façon d'enseigner se doit de tenir compte de l'évidence de ce fait.

Concernant le comment de l'apprentissage, nous ne favorisons pas les cours magistraux. Au contraire, nous encourageons la participation active des étudiants. Nous organisons des discussions, des tables rondes, des présentations orales suivies de questions, de débats, etc. On incite les stagiaires à poser des questions et à exprimer leurs opinions. Ces derniers ne doivent plus se contenter de se servir de leurs deux oreilles et de leurs yeux pour apprendre, mais ils doivent aussi utiliser leur bouche et parler. Le temps de la "passivité" est terminé et il faut faire un effort pour participer activement aux cours. Ceci n'a pas toujours été évident pour les stagiaires chinois qui ont grandi dans la crainte d'exprimer des opinions personnelles.

De plus, il y a une hantise de faire des erreurs qui empêche les étudiants d'ouvrir la bouche. L'erreur a été considérée plus comme une faute que comme un élément d'enrichissement important dans le processus d'apprentissage. Au début, l'apprenant chinois qui a peur d'émettre des phrases incorrectes a besoin d'être constamment rassuré, et ceci ne peut se faire qu'en employant un type d'enseignement assez informel, privilégiant la compétence communicative qui ne fait pas fi non plus de la compétence linguistique.

Le programme de français offert au Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine de Beijing (CLCC) est conçu de façon à laisser une grande liberté et flexibilité en matière de méthodologie. Il est un fait, cependant, que le processus d'apprentissage retenu dans l'élaboration de notre programme oriente clairement les activités d'enseignement, sans pour autant imposer les stratégies ou techniques à utiliser en salle de classe. Le processus suppose que l'on place l'apprenant dans des situations concrètes où il aura effectivement à comprendre et à produire des discours, à acquérir des connaissances pratiques et à objectiver ces pratiques. C'est à l'enseignant de décider comment il procédera, de choisir le matériel didactique approprié, d'assurer un environnement favorable et de déterminer la démarche à suivre.

Les matériaux sélectionnés s'adaptent à l'apprenant. Du fait que nous essayons sans cesse de partir de l'apprenant - et non plus d'un LIVRE unique - et que nous ayons affaire à plusieurs types de stagiaires, nous tenons compte également de leurs styles d'apprentissage diversifiés de leur formation antérieure, de leur personnalité, de leur âge, du fait qu'ils viennent d'une région éloignée ou de la ville, etc. Tout ceci affecte la sélection du processus méthodologique. Il serait utopique et erroné de prétendre que tous les stagiaires qui nous arrivent peuvent et doivent réussir par le truchement d'une seule et unique méthode. Comme le dit l'adage: "Plusieurs chemins mènent à Rome!" tout comme la combinaison de plusieurs techniques et méthodes peuvent favoriser l'apprentissage d'une langue... apprentissage qui est, répétons-le, beaucoup plus un savoir-faire qu'un savoir tout court. Pour nous, d'abord et avant tout, le savoir-faire en français se définit comme l'habileté à communiquer dans la langue cible, c'est-à-dire en FRANÇAIS. Les buts visés peuvent se résumer en ce seul objectif global qui est purement et simplement l'habileté à communiquer efficacement dans la langue cible.

6. L'habileté à communiquer

L'habileté à communiquer oralement et par écrit suppose la capacité d'utiliser la langue à différentes fins et dans différentes situations. Parler et écrire avec clarté et efficacité, c'est être capable de choisir et d'organiser ses mots et ses phrases en tenant compte de son intention de communication. C'est aussi être capable d'adapter son message aux circonstances de temps et de lieu dans lesquelles se déroule la communication. Enfin, savoir écrire et parler, c'est être capable de respecter le fonctionnement de la langue (les contraintes lexicales, orthographiques, syntaxiques et prosodiques) et le fonctionnement des discours (narratifs, descriptifs, argumentatifs et analytiques).

De même, savoir lire et écouter, c'est non seulement être capable de donner des sens aux mots et aux phrases, mais c'est aussi pouvoir saisir la signification particulière qu'ils prennent dans la situation où ils sont lus et écoutés, en tenant compte de celui qui les dit et des circonstances dans lesquelles ils sont dits. Savoir lire et écouter suppose évidemment la connaissance du fonctionnement de la langue et celle du fonctionnement du discours.

7. Problèmes rencontrés

Au CLCC, les membres du personnel canadien et chinois sont unanimes pour utiliser une approche communicative adaptée au contexte de la Chine et axée sur les besoins langagiers réels d'une clientèle se préparant à effectuer un stage au Canada. Malgré cette ferme décision et toute la bonne volonté déployée à enseigner la langue cible dans une perspective de communication, plusieurs difficultés existent, et ce, autant du côté des enseignants que de celui des apprenants. A titre d'illustration, voici quelques exemples concrets:

- difficulté à modifier un modèle d'enseignement basé sur les principes confucéens de l'autorité;
- difficulté de laisser tomber cette forte tendance à se considérer comme LA personne-clé dans la salle de classe;
- difficulté à adopter un style d'enseignement moins magistral de peur de ne pouvoir répondre aux questions des étudiants et de faire des erreurs;
- difficulté de rompre ou de relativiser cette tradition millénaire survalorisant le LIVRE au détriment de l'apprenant;
- difficulté de percevoir l'erreur comme partie intégrante du processus d'apprentissage (Ellis, 1986); difficulté de la percevoir comme un outil utile pour diagnostiquer les besoins langagiers des apprenants; difficulté d'analyser et/ou de classer les types d'erreur, d'en chercher la cause, afin d'ajuster son enseignement en conséquence;
- difficulté de percevoir les MANUELS (ou/et notes de cours, et/ou autres matériaux didactiques) comme de simples outils au service de l'enseignement ou/et de l'apprentissage;
- difficulté de démystifier le rôle de la GRAMMAIRE et d'intégrer sa connaissance (théorique et pratique) dans une perspective communicative et non plus comme une fin en soi. "Il ne s'agit pas seulement de comprendre ou de produire des énoncés, mais aussi et surtout

de savoir quand et où les utiliser. Il ne s'agit pas seulement de savoir reconnaître la valeur proportionnelle des énoncés, mais surtout de savoir distinguer les différentes valeurs communicatives que ces énoncés prennent dans des actes de communication selon les intentions poursuivies par les interlocuteurs" (Desmarais, 1986);

- difficulté de prendre des décisions concernant la nature du matériel didactique authentique à utiliser dans la salle de classe, de choisir les pratiques pédagogiques appropriées et de créer un environnement naturel favorisant les activités de communication;
- difficulté pour le professeur chinois, qui n'est pas un locuteur natif, d'élaborer son enseignement à partir de matériaux authentiques plutôt que d'un manuel unique. Quand le niveau de compétence dans la langue cible est plutôt bas, ce problème est loin d'être minime;
- difficulté de réellement se baser sur l'analyse des besoins des stagiaires comme instrument de prose, de décision et d'intervention dans la salle de classe;
- difficulté du professeur chinois qui n'a pas fait de stage au Canada à introduire la réalité socio-culturelle canadienne aux apprenants chinois qui eux, se préparent à y aller;
- difficulté de transformer la salle de classe en un carrefour de communication réelle;
- difficulté à exercer son imagination et sa créativité en matière méthodologique, car on est tellement habitué à "réciter" ses notes de cours ou à "lire" le livre;
- difficulté d'identifier et/ou de tenir réellement compte de la diversité des styles d'apprentissage des stagiaires et/ou de tous ces autres facteurs individuels affectant leur processus d'apprentissage de la langue cible;
- difficulté des apprenants à se "décentrer" du professeur - de qui il a trop tendance à dépendre émotivement - et à prendre le risque de participer activement aux activités de communication;
- difficulté de certains apprenants de prendre le risque de la parole spontanée quand il est tellement plus facile de mémoriser des textes appris par coeur;
- difficulté du personnel canadien et chinois du CLCC de récupérer ce qui est récupérable dans l'approche traditionnelle, d'effectuer une fusion heureuse entre le nouveau et l'ancien..."En somme", comme le dit Claude Germain (1986), "une pédagogie de la communication n'est pas synonyme de rejet des techniques pédagogiques passées. Ce qu'il faut avant tout est un réexamen des pratiques existantes afin de voir dans quelles mesure elles peuvent s'insérer dans le cadre élargi qu'est l'approche communicative. Du coup, certaines techniques (anciennes ou nouvelles, peu importe) peuvent alors être mises au premier rang si elles paraissent plus susceptibles que d'autres d'atteindre les buts visés."

Même s'il ne serait pas sage de minimiser les difficultés existantes, il ne faudrait pas non plus les dramatiser car elles ne sont pas insurmontables. C'est l'étroite coopération entre les professeurs chinois du CLCC, les intervenants canadiens et les apprenants chinois qui assure le succès de notre programme de formation linguistique et culturelle, coopération qui est sans cesse à faire et à refaire. Elle est davantage une mise en route continuelle qu'un fait accompli une fois pour toutes. C'est Bossuet qui nous rappelle que "le plus grand dérèglement de l'esprit, c'est de croire les choses parce qu'on veut qu'elles soient, et non pas parce qu'on a vu qu'elles sont en effet".

Conclusion

> "Ceux à qui l'esprit analytique fait défaut, tirent des conclusions simplistes, absolument affirmatives ou négatives." (Mao Tsé-Toung, 12 avril 1944)

Confucius n'est pas mort! Pour le meilleur et pour le pire, de mille et une façons, ses principes de paternalisme autoritaire influencent toujours les tréfonds de la mentalité chinoise. Dans l'enseignement des langues, par exemple, le professeur a encore tendance à dominer la salle de classe et l'apprenant est toujours porté à le regarder comme le détenteur du savoir. Pour plusieurs, le Livre est, par excellence, la source de la connaissance à acquérir. Quant à la Grammaire, on est encore tenté de l'apercevoir comme un ensemble de règles immuables permettant de maîtriser ou de contrôler la langue à acquérir. Même si l'approche utilisée au CLCC de Beijing est loin de tout rejeter de ce qui était fait auparavant, elle s'en distingue assez fortement en étant explicitement basée sur la communication. Désormais, lentement mais sûrement, l'émergence de l'approche communicative a ébranlé le concept d'universalité et de monolithisme des méthodes d'enseignement des langues'' (Boucher, 1986). Ce qui semblait à jamais figé dans un immobilisme éternel a maintenant commencé à bouger.

La Grande Muraille n'est pas tombée, mais on peut y apercevoir une fissure! Ça prend certainement du temps de combler les sérieuses lacunes qui existent dans l'enseignement des langues en Chine, mais comme l'affirme tranquillement Confucius, ''une impatience capricieuse ruine les plus grands projets''!

Bibliographie

Voir article précédent

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December, 1992
December, 1992

Volume 5, Number 2
Tome 5, Numéro 2

Monday Morning/Lundi Matin

(Special Issue)

A Magazine for Language Teachers in China
Revue pour les professeurs de langues en Chine

1983 — 1992

**Canada/China
Language Centre**

**Centre Linguistique
Canada/Chine**

1983 — 1992

Canada/China Language Centre

Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine

This special edition of *Monday Morning/Lundi matin* celebrates the ten years of operation of the Canada/China Language Centre and the 90th anniversary of Beijing Normal University, the host of the CCLC. This edition has been made possible by the staff of the CCLC who would like to thank the contributors for their thoughtfulness in the preparation of their letters, articles, and memories.

Cette édition spéciale de *Lundi matin/Monday Morning* félicite les dix années du CLCC et aussi le 90^{me} anniversaire de l'Université normale de Pékin qui joue le rôle d'hôte pour le CLCC. Cette édition est le résultat de beaucoup de travail de la part de tous les personnels au CLCC qui voudraient remercier les contributeurs pour leurs efforts dans la préparation des lettres, des articles, et aussi des mémoires.

MONDAY MORNING/LUNDI MATIN
A MAGAZINE FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN CHINA
REVUE POUR LES PROFESSEURS DE LANGUES EN CHINE

December, 1992, Volume 5, Number 2
Decembre, 1992, Tome 5, Numéro 2

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亲爱的读者:

值此《Monday Morning/Lundi Matin》特刊出版之际，我谨向刊物的读者们表示我的诚挚的问候!

中国—加拿大语言中心的工作是按照中、加双方于1986年12月共同签署的协议进行的，双方在友好的基础上进行合作，取得了可喜成绩，我谨向为此作出辛勤努力的中、加双方官员和教师表示谢意!

中国的改革开放政策取得了巨大进展，中国—加拿大语言中心的设立是开放政策的直接成果，我为北京师范大学能在此进程中做出贡献而感到高兴。

在北京师范大学，中国教师和加拿大同事们密切合作，增加了双方的友谊，也增强了中国人民与加拿大人民的联系与合作。在此，我也要向圣·玛丽大学为该项目工作过的人表示衷心的感谢和良好的祝愿!

简介：方福康博士，北京师范大学教授，现任北京师范大学校长。

Dear Readers,

I am pleased to be able to write an introductory letter to this special issue of *Monday Morning/Lundi Matin*.

It's a special pleasure to me, since I was involved in helping establish the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC). Saint Mary's University (SMU) worked closely with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) on the project, and thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of Dr. Mary Sun and her Chinese compatriots, the centre blossomed into reality in record time.

More importantly, it became and still remains a very vital component of the strong relationship between Canada and the People's Republic of China, which through the exchange of our countries' talented people has immensely benefitted both nations.

I've often said that no country can show more trust and faith in another country than to allow its citizens to be educated in that other country. We at SMU feel immensely privileged to have been an important part of the language and cultural education of the program's Chinese participants, and we have tried as best we could to live up to the immense obligation such trust imposes.

Working hand in hand with our Chinese colleagues at Beijing Normal University (BNU), we have not only developed a program which has helped expand the frontiers of knowledge, but we have forged a partnership which has strengthened our friendship.

To all who have been a part of our venture, especially those at BNU, I extend my heartfelt best wishes and my gratitude.

Yours sincerely,

Kenneth

Kenneth L. Ozmon
President
St. Mary's University

Dr. Kenneth L. Ozmon is currently serving his 14th year as president of SMU in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He has visited China several times, the last time as part of a delegation of 12 Canadian university presidents, which met with 12 Chinese presidential colleagues, including President Fang Fukang of BNU.

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Dear Readers,

This fall celebrates the tenth anniversary of the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) and the second year of the CCLC/SWPI Extension Centre (CCLC/SWPI) at the Southwest Petroleum Institute (SWPI) in Nanchong, Sichuan. On behalf of the SWPI and the Sino-Canadian Training Centre for Natural Gas Exploration and Exploitation, I would like to express our sincere thanks to the people in both language centres for what they have done for our institute.

As vice-president of SWPI and director of the Sino-Canadian Training Centre for Natural Gas Exploration and Exploitation, I participated in many of the negotiations and meetings between the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) about the Oil and Gas Technology Transfer Project (OGTTP). This project will help our government to upgrade the capacity of selected petroleum training institutions and research centres to use modern technology for the exploration and development of oil and gas resources. The gas centre does two important jobs: it selects and sends SWPI personnel to Canada so they will return with Canadian expertise, and it invites Canadian oil and gas experts to give lectures and training sessions for teachers in our institute and to our field engineers.

We have been selecting candidates to go to Canada and preparing for the implementation of the project since the CCLC/SWPI began in 1990. Every semester, we send a few candidates to this centre for language training. The curriculum is great; trainees not only have language training, but they also learn a great deal about Canadian culture. Both will help them easily adapt to Canadian society in the near future. The Canadian and Chinese teachers in this centre work very hard and cooperate well. From the CanTEST results, their work pays off; many students from our institute have passed the CanTEST. In addition, CCLC Beijing gives strong support to the CCLC/SWPI and our institute. The materials and books benefit the CCLC/SWPI staff and our language teachers in the Department of Basic Sciences. Also the CCLC leaders have paid several visits to our institute. They gave our teachers and trainees lectures and workshops which were very helpful.

It is my hope that we can continue to develop this cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Li Shilun
Vice-President
Southwest Petroleum Institute

Li Shilun, vice-president of the SWPI and director of the Sino-Canadian Training Centre for Natural Gas Exploration and Exploitation, is a famous expert in the development of gas fields and condensate oilfields in China. He has been doing research and teaching for more than forty years in these areas as well as in gas well testing, fluid dynamics and oil/gas phase studies. He is a member of the Science and Technology Commission of the CNPC, general director of the SWPI Journal, and a member of the editorial board for the Natural Gas Industry magazine.

An Introduction to the Canada/China Language Centre

Mao Dawei

The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC), instituted in 1983, is part of the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program (CCLCP) which was established by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in cooperation with China and is managed by Saint Mary's University (SMU) in Halifax. Located in Beijing Normal University (BNU) and co-managed by SMU and BNU, the centre plays a vital role in CIDA's China-related activities. Along with its extension centre in Southwest Petroleum Institute (SWPI) in Sichuan, the CCLC provides excellent services for CIDA-sponsored projects in China.

One mandate of the centre is to assess the language proficiency (English and French) of the candidates of CIDA's China-related projects and to provide 16 to 18 weeks of immersion language and cultural training in English and French. The goal of the training program is to help those candidates who have not reached the language requirement needed to be able to function efficiently in their future Canadian placement. The CCLC is responsible for administering the CanTEST twice a year, a test originally developed for the CCLC. Teacher training, both in China and in Canada, is another important mandate. The centre also contributes to the improvement of EFL/FFL teaching in colleges and other institutions in China by providing consultancy to EFL/FFL professionals as well as to CIDA projects.

The administrators and staff of the CCLC are from both Canada and China. The centre currently has two co-directors and an extension advisor, two head teachers (one for English and one for French), five Canadian EFL teachers and eight Chinese EFL teachers, two Chinese FFL teachers, and other support staff helping to fulfill the logistical needs. The CCLC has the capacity to enrol a maximum of seven regular classes each semester. Its teachers work eight hours a day, five days a week. Besides their teaching duties, they also contribute to the centre's other academic activities.

A communicative approach to language teaching is used in the CCLC. Unlike many other language centres in China which use either commercial textbooks or self-developed materials based on collections of major English-speaking countries, the CCLC English curriculum is based on authentic, Canadian content and trainees' placement task requirements. It serves the different needs of the trainees. In both the French and English teaching programs, emphasis is laid on improvement in four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. A combination of the communicative approach and other traditional teaching methods has produced the context-adjusted communicative approach which forms the theoretical basis of the CCLC curriculum.

As a part of the CCLC's teaching program, extra-curricular activities provide a profitable support for trainees' study. Video Night, twice a week, enables them to study Canadian culture and geography. Guest Speaker Night, once a week, provides them with an opportunity to get in touch with native speakers in a non-classroom setting and to formulate questions in English or French. The self-directed feature of these activities reflects the intention that trainees should work independently and develop their problem-solving strategies. Cultural and social activities are another major focus. On some important Canadian holidays, such as Hallowe'en or Christmas, the CCLC will organize special activities so trainees experience Canadian culture and develop their ability to socialize with other people, a skill needed in the future. All these activities are organized and implemented by teachers and trainees. Two language laboratories and a good collection of audio-video material provide trainees with the best learning environment they have ever had in China.

Teacher training is another important feature of the CCLC. With the unique curriculum, it is essential that every teacher knows the philosophy and methodology of teaching in the CCLC. Secondly, as the centre will gradually transfer to the Chinese side, the sustainability of the centre and of the teaching quality also require the regular training of the CCLC staff. Moreover, a rotation of Chinese staff is implemented at the CCLC to provide in-service training for FLD teachers so that EFL or FFL teachers will have a chance to update themselves on the current development and practice in EFL or FFL and to integrate this knowledge into their own teaching. In addition, each year some of the Chinese EFL teachers have been sent to Saint Mary's University for a TEFL training program while French teachers have been sent to Laval University. At the CCLC teacher training activities include lectures, seminars, and workshops presented by professionals from both outside and inside the centre, and seminars organized by the Canada/China Cooperation Support Unit (CCCSU) on cross-cultural training have added to teacher training activities. All these activities have proved beneficial for both Canadian and Chinese teachers.

The CCLC/SWPI Extension Centre (CCLC/SWPI), the first long-term CCLC extension centre, began in the fall of 1990. It is located in Nanchong, a small town in rural Sichuan. As a result of its location and purpose, the CCLC/SWPI is considerably smaller than the CCLC at BNU and, consequently, cannot offer identical teacher training or preparation for the CanTEST and Canada; however, it does offer equivalent training and English for special purposes for trainees from five centres involved in the Oil and Gas Technology Transfer Programme (OGTTP).

The CCLC is only the in-China part of a whole training program managed by the CCLCP. After trainees complete their studies at the CCLC and pass the CanTEST, they will go on to Canada for an in-Canada cross-cultural training program before going to their placement. Ongoing support for trainees and their Canadian supervisors and co-workers is also provided. This service is organized by the CCLCP and administered by a network of Regional Orientation Centres (ROCs) and outreach officers across Canada.

During the 12 semesters up to December, 1992, the CCLC has trained over 1,100 Chinese scholars and professionals from different ministries and provincial governments. Over 70% of trainees reached the language requirement after four months' training in the CCLC. Many of them have expressed their gratitude for the services they received at the CCLC.

Mao Dawei is the current English Head Teacher at the CCLC. He graduated from a postgraduate program in Qinghua University, P. R. China in 1987 and received an M.Ed. degree and an EFL certificate from Saint Mary's University, Canada, in 1990. He has been teaching EFL in colleges and universities since 1983 and is particularly interested in reading theory and practice.

Brought To You By...

Michael J. Herrick

The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) has been jointly managed by Saint Mary's University (SMU) and Beijing Normal University (BNU) since negotiations started in late 1986 and were finalized on December 31. One outcome of the Memorandum of Understanding was for Saint Mary's to host a *study tour* for CCLC and BNU staff. The study tour took place June 1-13, 1987. This article chronicles the event as a microcosm of the high energy and staff cooperation characteristic of the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program (CCLCP) of Saint Mary's University. It names some Canadian professionals at one time involved in or cognizant of this program. It concludes with a checklist of factors contributing to program excellence.

Before extensive planning for the tour started, a number of learning objectives had been drawn up so that the tour could be a success. There were three general objectives for the tour:

1) it was to be an opportunity for Chinese and Canadians to learn about each other and to build cooperation and friendship,
2) it was to be an orientation to Canadian culture for the Chinese guests, and
3) it was designed to enable the Chinese to learn about
    a) the Canadian university system,
    b) administrative management in Canadian institutions of higher learning, and
    c) the teaching, technology and curricula of Teaching English and French as Second Languages in Canada and Foreign Languages in China.

How these objectives would be met became the primary concern of CCLCP Director Michael Herrick. It was his responsibility to arrange the details and itinerary of the tour. With the help of Neil Balcom, Administrator, he first organized the goals of the tour, then the various financial and travel arrangements and accommodations. Since a Canadian university consists of administration, facilities, faculty (in this case language teaching), programs and students, activities and meetings were tentatively planned so that the Chinese visitors would have a significant experience in each area over a wide sampling of Canadian universities: ten universities in fourteen days, to be exact.

In order to organize this successfully, Dr. Herrick used two essential components of the CCLCP: communications and coordinators. The communications consisted of personally phoning nearly all of the Canadian administration representatives and faculty that the Chinese would meet. Once all the agreements were made in general, then the role of the coordinators came into play. Detailed planning was turned over to the coordinators of the five Regional Orientation Centres (ROCs) who were requested to make up daily itineraries for their immediate urban areas.

The tour began at the CCLC with the help of Canadian Co-Director Helen Vanwel, and her assistant, Caroline Ng, whose responsibilities were to make arrangements for the departure of six Chinese officials. From BNU there were the following: Vice-President Wang Zhenjia, Chinese CCLC Co-Director Chen Zhongwen, International Programs Director Lin Bijun, and Foreign Languages Department Chairwoman Yuan Xingju. From the State Education Commission (SEDC) there was Mr. Wang Baizhe, and to join the tour later in Ottawa Mr. Liu Wenzha from the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade (MFERT).

The tour was met in Vancouver and accompanied across Canada by its Canadian host, Dr. Herrick. The first set of meetings which PaROC coordinator John Redmond had set up for a leisurely entry into Canadian culture was taken over by Dr. Larry Sproul, Director of the University of British Columbia (UBC)'s Asian Centre. He greeted the visitors in their own language and started them on a marathon of visits in the Vancouver-Victoria area. Starting with Dr. Nancy Sheehan and Dr. Terry McGee, he involved BNU's Vice-President in signing a linkage agreement for a doctoral program.

Then Dr. Bernie Mohan and Professor Lyn Howes provided the first TEFL briefing that explained differences between second and foreign language learning and teaching approaches. Dr. Sproul had also arranged for the Chinese guests to visit with the Technical Interpreters Project at Simon Fraser University. Dr. Warren Gill was able to show them the in-Canada application and end product of the initial training offered by the CCLC. Then followed more information about distance education at the Knowledge Network, explained by Glen Mitchell, and a briefing the next day at the University of Victoria by the Director of International Education, Dr. Robin Ruggles.

Finally, for the second of eight formal dinners, the visitors and their host were invited to the home of UBC's President, Dr. David Strangeway. After the Chinese guests were treated to a cloudless sunset in the Pacific and a fine salmon dinner, Dr. Strangeway rose to toast Vice-President Wang who reciprocated with a thank-you toast. Both praised each other's great, large, key universities.

It seemed on this end of Canada that there were only two universities in the world. Then Dr. Herrick offered a toast to these two fine universities brought together in cooperation and friendship by another small, wise and powerful, 180-year-old university, Saint Mary's, the arranger of marriages and the holder of the CIDA contract. UBC and BNU graciously acknowledged Saint Mary's role in the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program (CCLCP).

The next day the tour continued across the country. Canada being so huge and time so short, the next stop was to be OROC in Toronto. As the plane flew over the Rocky Mountains, Dr. Herrick knew that the group was safely held aloft by the good thoughts of PROC coordinator, Susan Babcock, beamed up from the University of Alberta. Had the group landed, they would have been wined, dined and informed by Dr. Brian Evans, Mr. Robin Couts, and teaching staff of the PROC.

Upon arrival in Toronto, OROC coordinator Lynn Mark had arranged for other BNU faculty who were graduate students in the Toronto area to meet their colleagues and act as translators. The Chinese visitors were then briefed by the University of Toronto's English Language Institute and met twelve T/ESL specialists, among them Dr. David Mendelsohn, Ms. Vivian McDonough, Professor Joan Laird, and Ms. Eleanor Adamowski. Next, program administrators at Glendon College briefed the Chinese on a previous program designed specifically for Chinese teachers who would study in Canada and then teach in the CCLTC. The administrators included Dr. David Bell, Dr. John Lennox, Dr. Anthony Hopkins, Dr. Nicholas Elson, Ms. Suzanne Firth, and a special CCLCP consultant and friend, Dr. Ian Martin.

Toronto afforded the only rest stop of the trip; the reason was Niagara Falls. If a Canadian had only one day and one event to which to invite visitors, an event that they would remember forever, what would it be? The Falls didn't fail to be that significant memory because the day was crystal clear, the view from the revolving restaurant provided a magnificent panorama for another of the ten formal lunches the visitors experienced, and the Maid of the Mist was as exciting as ever. What could top that experience? Well, Madame Yuan Xingju managed to convince everyone that her choice of all the fast foods on Yonge Street was the cultural treat we should try: Kentucky Fried Chicken.

In Ottawa before meeting CIDA staff, especially China Desk Officer Madame Elizabeth Racicot, the study tour members were immersed in ESL/EFL at Carleton University, and CanTEST and teacher training at the University of Ottawa, as briefed by Dr. Mari Wesche, Professor Margaret Des Brisay, Mrs. Rhoda Diebel, and Dr. Pierre Calvé, who discussed the M.Ed in Second Language Teaching. At Carleton, after a warm welcome by President William Beckel, there was a briefing by professors Ellen Cray, Ian Pringle, Devon Woods, Pat Currie, and other institute and program directors. They presented the rationale for the Carleton experimental program where the first twelve CCLC Chinese teachers were to be trained in TEFL during the next two years. Even Dr. Herrick, who had requested the meetings, was overwhelmed by the number of committed administrators and professors at both universities who warmly welcomed the visitors into the centres of their campuses and filled them with information useful for future program decision-making.

The same hospitality was afforded by the English and French language teaching components of the program at CAMEC in Montreal where the group had the finest Chinese dinner of the tour at the Chrysanthemum Restaurant, hosted by Concordia University Vice-Rector, F. R. Whyte, and International Cooperation Director Martin Singer. The number of Canadian university administration, faculty, and students met in Montreal alone totalled twenty. A dozen were specialists in language teaching and administration brought together by the CCLCP for the purpose of showing off the best that Canadian universities had to offer. From Concordia: C. L. Bertrand, Bruce Barkman, C. L. Bertrand, R.F. Schmidt, D. J. Dicks, Patsy Lightbown, B. Smith, G. Taggart and J. Upshur. From CAMEC: Dr. Charles LeBlanc and Mr. Jacques Lamontagne; and from l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes, Mrs. Dulude and French-speaking Chinese students.

An event typical of the efficiency of communications and the commitment of the coordinators occurred the first night in Montreal as the group was standing at the desk of the Delta Hotel to be checked in. Dr. Herrick stepped backward and nearly tripped over a little boy. He wondered what the child was doing out so late at night as the boy tried to give him a sheaf of papers he had in one hand. The other hand was clasping the hand of his father, CAMEC coordinator Patrick Brouchard. They had brought the next day's hot-off-the-press itinerary so that the group would always stay informed.

Then in Halifax the study tour was met by the AROC coordinator, Judy Matthew, and National Coordinator of the ROCs, Ms. Sondra Marshall Smith, who escorted the visitors to a Canada-China Friendship Conference happening at Dalhousie University and, of course, to Peggy's Cove (including a fisherman's cottage) and the Bluenose. In Halifax the Chinese visitors were almost home because the hosting university this time was their partner, Saint Mary's University. There they met the administration and faculties of the various programs of interest to further training and development for BNU professors and CCLC Chinese teaching staff to be exchanged in the CIDA-supported linkage: Dr. Michael MacMillan, Mr. Guy Noel, Dr. George Schuyler, Dr. Michael Larsen, Dr. Thomas Musial among others. Another key person was the CCLCP accountant, Ms. Janice Burke.

To visit 12 Canadian universities, the 6 Chinese visitors had travelled to 5 cities in 4 provinces from sea to sea, enjoyed 8 formal dinners and 10 lunches, visited 9 language or graduate programs, and met 28 senior administrators and 52 language teaching or education faculty (with one dinner to go!). The final dinner featured Atlantic Canada lobsters for everyone. The tables were filled by BNU, SEDC, MFERT visitors, other French and ESL university professors associated with the project, Saint Mary's faculty and administration, and the CCLCP staff. It was here that President Kenneth L. Ozmon toasted everyone brought together by Saint Mary's University.

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Such an extensive study tour in so few days is not possible without considering the following points by way of summary:

- Set clear objectives beforehand so they provide a guide or outline for the activities and learning to be achieved.
- Provide a variety of activities to sample extensively yet experience a few events in depth.
- Maintain a communication system that works efficiently and use it extensively.
- Select smart, high energy people and give them the encouragement and freedom to make decisions.
- Create a situation in which there is so much goodwill that everyone wants to see the project succeed and works to make it succeed.
- Invite the Chinese guests to participate in the decision-making once they have enough experience with a number of options to make educated choices.

Dr. Michael J. Herrick, director of the CCLCP from 1986 through 1989 and from the Faculty of Education at SMU, helped make the move from the University of International Business and Economics to Beijing Normal University and to stabilize the program during a transition period.

Moving the CCLC to Beijing Normal University

Chen Zhongwen

A major historical change occurred in 1986 when the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) moved from the University of International Business and Economics (UIBE) to Beijing Normal University (BNU). At that time, as the Secretary General of BNU, I took part in the preparations for the move. Afterwards, I became the first Chinese director of the CCLC. It is still exciting to review the evolution of the CCLC during that period.

The Canadian director estimated that about 800 square metres of space would be necessary for the CCLC class rooms, language laboratories, offices and so on. It was very difficult to meet this need, because all departments at BNU complain that they do not have enough space. BNU did have some empty rooms, but they were in poor condition and scattered in different buildings. In order to create a better working environment for the CCLC, the president of BNU offered the present location on the fourth floor of building No. 2 and persuaded all the people who had occupied the fourth floor to move to other places. Those occupants made a lot of trouble and put up obstacles. Some of them asked for repairs or decoration of their offices; some required more space, and others said they had no manpower for the move. We spent almost half a year solving all those problems.

Another big problem was that all the Canadian teachers (eleven at that time) and their families would move from the Friendship Hotel to BNU's campus. At that time, the foreign experts' building at BNU had not been completed. Because it was related to their own living conditions, the Canadian teachers paid much attention to the facilities of this building. They visited the incomplete building, and offered many comments and suggestions on how to improve the accommodation. Some of those suggestions were adopted by the construction department. For instance, walls which were originally planned between the bedroom and the balcony were removed, and a picture rail was put on the wall. The CCLC Canadian teachers were the first residents at BNU's foreign experts' building. These new residents had many problems: the rooms were not warm enough, the hot water supply was too limited, and there was something wrong with the air conditioners. They also felt it was inconvenient to call a taxi or make a long distance phone call. Despite all these difficulties, Canadian teachers got used to living at BNU with the efforts of both the Canadians and Chinese. During their stay, they made a lot of Chinese friends and learned Chinese and *Taiji*. Even the lovely children could speak a little Chinese.

I worked at the CCLC for only two years but I learned much from my Canadian friends. They worked enthusiastically and treated students strictly but considerately. Sometimes we argued with each other, but this only made us feel closer. The CCLC is not only a centre for language training, but it is also a centre for promoting mutual understanding between Chinese and Canadians.

Chen Zhongwen, presently Vice-President of the Institute of Education Administration, BNU, was the first Chinese Director of the CCLC in 1987 and one of the people who helped in the move of the CCLC from UIBE to BNU.

Cooperation, Friendship And Contributions

Yi Daizhao

The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) has experienced ten glorious years, during which it has trained hundreds of people who, after having received further professional training in Canada, have become experts in various fields of the Chinese modernization.

With its professional staff, quality teaching and modern facilities, the CCLC has become one of the best intensive language and cultural training centres in China. Not only has it trained so many professional people, but it also developed friendships between Chinese and Canadian personnel in the spirit of cooperation. Year in and year out, both Chinese and Canadian administrators and teachers, working shoulder to shoulder, have overcome a series of difficulties and attained great achievements in academic areas. Knowledge is power, so the language and cultural training received at the CCLC can be considered as solid preparation for academic studies and overseas experience.

The ten years have seen great changes in China and have also seen great contributions by the Chinese and Canadian teachers to Chinese education. We will always remember the Canadian friends who shared responsibilities and happiness with us and devoted themselves to the great cause of the modernization of China.

The past ten years are full of memorable events and have brought to us many priceless recollections. As a former Chinese director of the CCLC, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all our friends, both Chinese and Canadian, for their significant support, great contributions and precious friendship.

On this special occasion of the 10th anniversary of the CCLC, I would like to present my poem to all of you as a token of friendship.

shi nian shu mu mu cheng lin,
It takes ten years for trees to grow into a deep forest,

bai nain shu ren ren cheng cai;
It takes a hundred years to educate people to become talented;

qian zai you yi ning zhong jia,
Everlasting is the friendship between China and Canada,

wan fang zhi yin tian ya lai.
And close friends join us from all over the world.

Yi Daizhao is an associate professor of the Foreign Languages Department, BNU. As Chinese director, he worked at the CCLC from 1987-1991. As a visiting scholar, he studied *Theory of Translation* and *American Literature* at the University of Massachusetts, USA in 1985-1986; and, in 1992, he spent six months studying *Canadian Education* and *Methodology of TESL* in the Faculty of Education, SMU, Halifax, Canada.

Creativity in Designing a Curriculum for the CCLC

Elizabeth Gatbonton

Introduction

In 1989, I was hired as the Curriculum Consultant for the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) with a mandate to develop a standard curriculum and support materials for the English language teaching program. Although at this time the centre was already in its seventh year of operation, it was still without a standard curriculum. It only had a taxonomy of objectives as the teaching guide; this, however, was revised each time a new group of Canadian teachers took over. While the centre could have continued to function well (as it has in the past seven years) with only this flexible taxonomy as guide (Scoggan, 1985), several factors prompted the need to standardize the curriculum. The centre is a service program for the joint Canada-China projects funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). As an aid program it is designed to hand over in time the management of the project to trained personnel in the host university to sustain the program. There was a feeling from both the Canadian and Chinese faculty and administration that a standard curriculum was essential to continue the goals of the program despite the change in administration. Thus, it was agreed that the transfer of management procedure would include the development of a standard curriculum as well as textbooks and materials that could be used to implement it.

Needless to say, participating in curriculum development (CD) at the CCLC was an interesting and rewarding experience, that touched many aspects of the lives of the CCLC teachers. Professionally, it led to a full and critical examination of our accumulated repository of wisdom about curriculum design and development today. In searching for models that we could adopt or mould to meet the demands of our program we had to examine many of our assumptions and theories and view them in a new light. It led us to look carefully at ourselves to see what we could offer, not only in terms of ideas to solve the curriculum design problems we encountered, but also for what we could give in order to deal with the difficulties brought about by the differences in our backgrounds and cultural perceptions. To arrive at a curriculum that suited the differences of our personalities, priorities and teaching styles, we had to make compromises and adjustments. For my part the whole process has been a rewarding one. When I finally cross the last *t* and dot the last *i* in my work at the CCLC, I know I will walk away enriched by the experience academically and personally. In the process of working at the CCLC I have had the pleasure of working with all kinds of intelligent, interesting, and hard-working people in China and across Canada. I have had the opportunity of making friendships that will last even beyond the life of the curriculum and CCLC. In this short article to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the CCLC, I will discuss briefly some of the interesting highlights of our CD experiences.

Organizing the CD team

Numerous discussions about the curriculum held before 1989 had already made clear that the standard CCLC curriculum could not be anything but the product of the joint efforts of both the Canadian and the Chinese teaching staff. Thus, when I came to China to start the curriculum development process, my first task was to establish a joint Canadian-Chinese curriculum development team. I was fortunate to have been assigned Gu Guijing, at that time the Chinese head teacher, as my partner and colleague in this endeavour. Together (and with the full support of the CCLC administration), we began in earnest to form our CD team. We found, however, that this was easier said than done.

As the curriculum consultant's position was designated as Canadian-based, the curriculum development schedule adopted for the CD team encompassed two to three intensive six-to-eight-week periods per year, coinciding with visits to China between 1989-1992. Within each period, two to three afternoons a week plus every other hour that could be carved out of the teachers' heavy teaching schedules were devoted to curriculum work.

In a North American design context, teachers take it for granted that at one time or the other they will be called upon to participate in CD. With one or two courses on curriculum design as part of their training, most feel equipped and ready to do so. Of course, CD participation represents extra work but volunteers can look towards certain types of compensation for their efforts; for example, reduced teaching time or strengthening their CV's. But there is no such reward system in the Chinese system. Reduction in load means little because each teacher already carries the minimum load (6-8 hours of teaching a week). As a matter of fact, CD participation only represents an unpaid overload. Claiming to have worked on curriculum development does little to bolster chances of getting promotions or getting better jobs because these simply are not relevant considerations in the Chinese context.

To form the team, then, we spent considerable time finding out what would motivate each potential participant, particularly our Chinese colleagues. We spent the first few weeks of the first development period chatting with them individually or in small groups. We found that improving current language skills and language teaching abilities was motivating for some; and others hoped it would enhance the chance of getting into graduate studies abroad. A few were motivated by the belief that a greater familiarity with the communicative approach now would give them an edge when this methodology, already much discussed in China (Li, 1984; Wang, 1986), would become widespread.

Capitalizing on what benefits people would get out of CD, we urged everyone to join. The response was enthusiastic and, in the end, we had a team composed of the four Canadian teachers teaching at that time and most of the Chinese teachers. Through the three CD years the composition of the team changed as new Canadian and Chinese teachers entered the team or replaced others (the Chinese teachers left to go to Canada or to resume their duties at the Foreign Languages Department) or left for personal reasons. All throughout, however, the team remained a joint Canadian/Chinese team of very hard-working and dedicated people.

Negotiating differences

In negotiating a curriculum, it is assumed that all participants will have an equal say, albeit each from his or her own perspective. Teacher participants are expected to bring their knowledge of the classroom situation; the administrators, their knowledge of policy and overall educational goals, and so on. The trainees come with their needs and expectations; the curriculum experts, their knowledge of the theory and practice of curriculum development and language learning. If these participants have differing perceptions of the curriculum or of the negotiation process itself, they would resolve their differences through actual negotiations. In these negotiations, participants would start with certain positions, but expect these to be modified as compromises are defined.

When we began CD at the centre we had no reason to believe that this process would not work. We were fully aware that our team consisted of two groups of teachers with widely differing cultural backgrounds and teaching/learning experiences. Nevertheless, we viewed these differences as simply one more set in a list of differences to be *worked out* during the discussions. It did not take long for us to see the flaw in our assumption, although becoming sensitized to this problem came from a rather unexpected source. As in any CD project, we chose the CD *meeting* as forum for resolving differences. Despite efforts to promote equal participation from the Canadian and Chinese participants, we found these meetings to be consistently heavily dominated by Canadians. The Chinese remained withdrawn and passive, participating little except when directly asked to join in; and even then carefully avoiding open acceptance or rejection of any of the decisions taken. While, initially, the low level of Chinese participation could be attributed to inexperience in dealing with Canadians, it became clear that this explanation failed when the situation persisted even after everyone had already established good rapport with one another when working on other matters. When it became obvious that the situation would jeopardize our ability to create a joint curriculum, we focused our attention on this problematic situation.

Our analysis revealed the source of the problem to be the groups' differing culturally-bound perceptions about the role of meetings itself. To the Canadians a meeting was where consensus was formed. People came to them with undefined ideas but expected these to be altered, expanded, or made sharper through negotiations and compromises. To the Chinese, the meeting functioned primarily as a forum where decisions, already previously taken elsewhere, were made public. Participation in meetings was governed by social constraints, many springing from hierarchical and status considerations; for example, people in authority are expected to speak before ordinary members. What became clear was that the very instrument that we assumed to be effective in ironing out the differences between the two groups, namely, the curriculum development meetings, was itself the source of the problem.

After this became evident, we negotiated a compromise procedure for these meetings. We informally adopted a two-tier meeting. The first tier was dedicated to presenting and discussing proposals and counter-proposals without taking any firm decisions on any of them; the second, to making these decisions. Between these two sessions, we approached the teachers in small groups or individually so that we could make sense of their real reactions to the proposals. During the second session, we helped coax these reactions out for discussions so that they could feature in everyone's final decisions.

It took time for our CD negotiations to find a perfect flow, but in the end we felt we had a good working model. Success was, of course, due to everyone's willingness to listen to one another and compromise. As the members of our team changed throughout the CD period, the dynamics of the interactions also changed, but always towards a greater sense of working together for one common end.

Working out a suitable methodology

When the CCLC was established in 1982, it was agreed that a communicative approach would be used (Patrie, 1982). However, this approach was new for the Chinese (Li, 1984; Wang, 1986). In fact, it proved daunting to them even after several terms of "team teaching" with their Canadian counterparts (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Sun, 1985). In analyzing the difficulties the Chinese teachers had with this approach, we realized that it was the lack of a standard methodology associated with it that contributed a great deal to the problem. The Chinese teachers hoped to learn the approach by observing Canadians use it. However, they found not one, but many, different and often conflicting models to follow so that they were at a loss about what to do (Burnaby & Sun, 1989). The game-like nature of many of the prescribed activities also did not help alleviate the problem. Used to a methodology where learning is associated with analyzing text, formulating rules, and memorizing target elements, both the Chinese teachers and trainees felt sceptical that learning would take place when these were not fulfilled.

It was clear that to satisfy the demands of the Chinese teaching situation, the approach must combine the best of western-based communication approaches (insistence on genuine communication as a medium for learning) and the best of traditional Chinese teaching methodologies (reliance on activities that focus on the formal structure of language: text analysis, grammatical explanations, drills, text and rule memorization).

In working on this problem, however, we found that although many people shared our conviction that a modified communicative approach alone would be suitable for China (Maley, 1983; Li, 1984), we found the literature on curriculum design in China or elsewhere had very few concrete proposals on how to effect this combination As a result, we had to work out our own model and figure out the shape of the communicative methodology that would be suitable for our goals.

The methodology

The methodology we eventually developed for the CCLC allows the teacher to lead the trainees through three distinct but tightly integrated phases of learning: a preparation phase, a communicative phase, and a consolidation phrase, coming normally, though not exclusively, in this order. In the *Preparation Phase*, the teacher first helps the trainees understand the purpose and procedure of the lesson's main activity(ies). Then, he or she helps them become receptive to these activity(ies) by arousing their curiosity (e.g., prediction), by helping them marshall prior or background knowledge (e.g., brainstorming), and finally, by helping them overcome barriers to their full participation in these activities (e.g., anticipating difficult vocabulary they will encounter in the texts). After the preparatory stage the teacher then leads the trainees to participate in the activities of the *Communicative Phase*.

The central assumption of this communicative phase, at the CCLC, is that it provides a genuine communicative situation which will stretch the learners' levels of competence, decrease their fear of risk taking, improve their fluency, and enable them to sift through their current language resources and identify their needs. In the ideal communicative framework the process works in this way. Firstly, the teacher engages trainees in various activities such as information gap situations, puzzles, problem solving, role play, and games. Next the teacher asks the trainees to work by themselves, carefully encouraging them to use whatever language resources they have to complete the task. As long as the trainees are able to handle the situation with their own resources, the teacher refrains from intervening but watches, guides, and participates in the activity. If the trainees meet a communication problem (and it is inevitable if the activity is well chosen), they will pause and grope for words. The teacher then intervenes and gives the missing utterances (or target utterances) so they can be used, immediately, in context, when trainees will recognize their meaning and function. When the teacher steps in, intervention can come in the form of a casual, unobtrusive prompting of the missing word or phrase, or the enquiring repetition of a problematic phrase inducing the trainee to correction without breaking the communicative flow. It can also, of course, come in the form of a brief formal explanation although this frequently interrupts the communicative flow. In addition if the activity is designed so the opportunity to use the new utterances frequently recurs, the trainees not only gain a deeper understanding of the utterances but also develop a certain degree of ease and automaticity with them.

To ensure that this type of learning occurs, the communicative activities should conform to the following criteria. First, activities should be truly communicative; that is they should involve situations relevant to the trainees' Canadian goals where genuine interactions and negotiations occur. Secondly, activities should be inherently repetitive (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 1988). They should be designed so that the goals can be accomplished only by completing a series of interconnected stages or a series of repeated actions. For example if the ultimate goal is to arrive at a conclusion about the nature of an event, the activity should be designed to unfold in steps. The activity could require the trainees to discuss in pairs (step 1), to present their findings in a small group (step 2), and to have this group compile the information (step 3) and present it to the large group (step 4). Designing activities in this manner results in repetition becoming an inherent part of the activity rather than a mere addition for the purposes of language learning.

The third is that the activities should require the use of a critical mass of commonly recurring utterances which are associated with functions such as those expressing opinions or disagreements. These utterances should include what are commonly known as formulae and routines and gambits, as well as utterances not commonly regarded as formulas but which recur in the same form each time they are used (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 1988). For example, "arson is suspected" or "police would not speculate on the cause of the fire" might be found in news stories about fire. Thus, trainees experience these target elements in context, gain an understanding of their use, meaning and function, and rehearse them to a certain degree of ease and automaticity. They become the focus of acquisition in context during the communication phase. They become the subject of analysis during the consolidation phase.

In the *Consolidation Phase* the trainees focus on utterances that they have used during the communication phase; in particular, upon utterances that gave them difficulties. The activities in this phase include a) fluency and accuracy oriented activities that help the trainees practise understanding/producing fluently and accurately certain utterances and texts they have already attempted to use repeatedly in the communication phase, b) test exercises to find out how well they have mastered these utterances and texts, and c) various form-focusing activities such as analyzing the formal properties of these utterances such as structural properties, intonation, stress properties, or discourse properties, and examining their content structure for the meaning of the utterances, the illocutionary force, or socio-cultural uses, the organization of knowledge, and so on.

Needless to say the success of this methodology depends on how well the different phases are integrated. Integration is achieved not only by making the preparation phase focus upon getting the trainees receptive and ready to do the activities of the communication phase. It is also achieved by making the consolidation phase dependent upon what difficulties may be experienced during the communication phase. If the trainees encounter no problems in a particular area, there is no need for a consolidation activity in that area. If they do, the consolidation activities will follow for the context-adjusted communicative approach and the curriculum design depending upon what items are perceived to be useful in helping the trainees overcome their difficulties.

Conclusion

Those who participated actively in the search for a communicative methodology for the curriculum will remember the long seminars and workshops held over this issue. They will remember the long hours of discussions, the private and public dissensions that naturally arose over many contentious issues, and the debate about what does communicative mean in the communicative approach or what is form-focused teaching. They will recall the feelings of scepticism and confusion and the frustrations that arose when safe and familiar assumptions, techniques and procedures were criticized, modified, or replaced with new and more uncertain ones. They will also remember how, when the methodology was defined and materials constructed, they had to try out these modules in their classes with very little assurance that they would work. Hopefully, too, they will remember the feeling of relief in understanding what it was all about and finally *getting it*.

By way of conclusion, the CD experience at the CCLC is more than just designing a curriculum and developing a set of materials suitable for the centre in the next few years. It is first and foremost a learning experience where the participants have learned something about curriculum development, materials development, and the communicative methodology, by being part of it. The day that the teachers who participated in curriculum and materials development and implementation at the centre finally replace the curriculum and support materials we left them with their own, the main aim of CD at the CCLC will have been accomplished.

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Implementing a Canadian Curriculum in China

Gregory Strong

Curriculum Survey

Curriculum development began with the informal efforts of the first teachers at the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC). This development continued under the supervision of committees created in 1984 to develop syllabi for a multi-skills EFL course combining listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In the years that followed, release time was given to teachers for further curriculum development. For the most part, these curricula were simply statements of goals, teaching objectives, and references. A survey was completed in 1987 of 14 Chinese teachers who were either working (at the CCLC) or had worked at the Centre and were studying in Canada, as well as 10 university teachers of English at other Chinese institutions (Burnaby, Sun, 1989). In general, the Chinese teachers' views were that the communicative language teaching methodology being used at the Centre would be useful to Chinese trainees who were going abroad. However, the teachers did not think it would be useful for Chinese trainees who were learning the analytical skills to read and translate English technical articles and documents into Chinese.

The Chinese teachers also mentioned that they found it difficult to work with a curriculum in which lessons and exercises were not provided. They were also concerned that they might not be able to answer questions about the English language or about Canadian culture that might arise in a class taught using a communicative methodology.

Burnaby and Sun (Ibid) concluded that the strongest measures to make English teaching more communicative would be either to provide Chinese teachers with more training and experience in English or to provide more native speakers. Burnaby and Sun (Ibid) suggested that another possibility might be to replace native or experienced English speakers with a curriculum and materials that reflected a cognitively-based analysis of the sociolinguistic and strategic structures of English.

The Development of a Curriculum

The possibility of developing a new curriculum to make English teaching more communicative was examined by Dionne, Cray and Huot (1988). Among their recommendations were that the CCLC, its aims, operation, philosophy, and learning resources should be described, that a methodology should be articulated, and that teaching materials should be written.

The earlier curricula were superseded by a curriculum development project in 1990 under the direction of Dr. Elizabeth Gatbonten and Mme. Gu Guijing, and with the cooperation of the CCLC teachers, who developed a comprehensive communicative curriculum (Gatbonton & Guijing, 1991). One of the most innovative features of the new curriculum was its adjustment of a communicative methodology to a Chinese teaching context. Another innovation was its promotion of language fluency through the identification and repetition of key or target phrases as they occurred in communicative activities.

To accommodate Chinese teaching methodologies in this curriculum, the communicative activities are followed by consolidation activities. The communicative phase of each class occurs when the trainees are engaged in problem-solving activities in which they share information. This is followed by a consolidation phase when the teacher intervenes and focuses the trainees' attention on the language they have been using. The teacher may also provide supplementary exercises and explanations. In this sense, the approach is "context-adjusted" (Ibid, p.22).

Language fluency is developed through what Gatbonten and Segalowitz (1988) term "creative automatization" (p. 473). In brief, this approach incorporates some principles of language instruction based on form and on repetition into an interactive, communicative classroom. In this way, the language learner acquires the ability to produce utterances "automatically" or without too much hesitation and also learns to select the appropriate language for a situation.

Both Canadian and Chinese teachers contributed to the new curriculum. Previous curricular objectives and tasks were incorporated into it, and the concerns of Chinese teachers were addressed. At their request, the new curriculum switched from a multi-skills approach to the teaching of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as separate skills. Also at the request of the Chinese teachers, the curriculum emphasized practical tasks such as presenting an oral report or reading a magazine article.

The new curriculum was designed as a series of modules based on Canadian themes, science, the rules and procedures of the Canadian workplace, and the appropriate cognitive and discourse skills to operate effectively in Canada. The modular approach enables teachers to choose those modules most suitable to the language ability and interests of their classes. The themes include such subjects as health, the environment, justice, education, seniors, and medicare. The themes are the same in all four courses to enable trainees to transfer knowledge from one skill area to another.

In the Listening course, trainees learn different listening and note-taking strategies suitable for listening to a variety of authentic materials including weather reports, news broadcasts, interviews, and academic lectures. The Listening course provides the candidates with examples of the types of media broadcasts and academic lectures that they may encounter while living and studying in Canada.

In the Speaking course, trainees role play different situations they will encounter in Canada. These include describing their field of specialization and dealing with interpersonal problems in the office or at university.

Trainees in the Reading course study authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, and journals, and complete activities designed to make them aware of the structure of certain types of articles. Trainees learn such skills as predicting the content of articles through reading headlines, finding the main ideas, and classifying information. The trainees may work in pairs or in small groups that each have a different series of articles. Information is pooled afterwards in order to complete the activities in a module.

Trainees in the Writing course prepare a curriculum vitae, letters of request, and a program report. Trainees also learn the skills of writing paragraphs and short essays. The writing process of draft, revision, and peer tutorial is emphasized in this course.

The In-service Challenge

There are obviously many differences between the teaching styles of Canadians and Chinese (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Courchêne, 1992a, 1992b; Smith, 1991; Yen, 1987). One difference between the two groups is in their relative familiarity with teaching language learning strategies.

The skill teams of teachers at the CCLC have found that few of the Chinese teachers at the Centre were very experienced in doing pair and group work with their classes, in using brainstorming, and in leading classroom discussions. This is not surprising given the teacher-centered classes and the emphasis on content knowledge rather than teaching methodologies in EFL instruction in China (Cumming, 1987; Maley, 1986: Yen, 1987; Smith, 1991).

However, there are many uses of pair and group work in the curriculum. Classes are supposed to use pair and group work to practice their language skills. English is used as the medium of communication between trainees working together. Pair and group work provides an opportunity for peer tutorials and modelling of language behaviours. Working in this way is also a motivational device in the classroom and can be particularly effective in language teaching. Cumming (1985) and Ling (1986) note the usefulness of pair and group work when trainees are learning to write in a second language.

The technique of brainstorming enhances trainees' reading in a second language according to Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto (1989). In a brainstorming session, the teacher identifies a word or topic and asks the trainees to verbalize related words and ideas in order to enlarge their vocabulary and develop their reading comprehension.

This technique is central to each of the skill areas. It may also be used at the end of an activity as well. In Listening and in Reading, it may be used to teach trainees to make predictions about the content of a listening passage or of a reading text. Brainstorming may also be used in Speaking to elicit target phrases from trainees. It may be used to generate ideas and vocabulary for writing activities.

Discussing the relationship between trainees' experiences and a text emphasizes reading for meaning and improves trainees' reading (Carrell, et. al, Ibid). This discussion uses their background knowledge to foster comprehension. It usually consists of these steps: (1) a teacher-led discussion of trainees' experiences that are related to the text (activating their background knowledge and motivating them for reading); (2) trainees' reading of short parts of the text; (3) teacher's questioning to establish a relationship between the text and the trainees' experience. The teacher's role is to guide the trainees through the cognitive processes related to understanding a text so that they can use the strategy independently (Carrell, et al., Ibid).

However, discussing the relationship between trainees' experiences and a text can prove to be very difficult if neither the teachers nor the trainees have had the experiences described in a text. Chinese teachers are possibly at an even greater disadvantage here than they are in using new teaching techniques.

For one thing, the curriculum is about Canada. Few of the Chinese teachers at the CCLC have been to Canada or even learned much about it prior to working at the CCLC. The Reading course has many culture-bound references, on everything from Canadian culture to social and political aspects of life in Canada. One part of the reading module "Being Canadian" focuses on the role of the Governor General in Canada. In this case, there is little that can be done about this problem given that the curriculum is to prepare Chinese trainees for study in Canada through learning as much about it as possible. As a result, this section of the module was removed.

Second, some aspects of the curriculum include references to experiences that are unfamiliar to Chinese teachers. These include the extensive use of telephones, and telephone directories, things common enough in countries such as Canada but far less typical in China. The fourth module in the Speaking course is "Using a Telephone" and it outlines a series of dialogues and target utterances related to telephone talk and even includes strategies for leaving messages on telephone answering machines.

Few offices in China are operated as they would be in Canada, and they are not similarly equipped. When leading discussions related to these experiences, Chinese teachers must either rely on their limited knowledge or discuss these experiences with Canadian teachers prior to class.

These kinds of experiences are found in every aspect of the curriculum. In the Listening course, module 16 "Food and Football" is about a pre-game discussion with the men who are organizing breakfast for two different football teams that are going to meet for a Grey Cup championship. Because the listening passage is about Western food, it is of high interest to the trainees, but the teacher using the material must explain the different types of food such as "french toast," "caesar salad," and "cereal" to the trainees and give them a further explanation of the Grey Cup.

Similar problems arise in the writing curriculum. In the first module of the Writing course, trainees write a curriculum vitae. Though this document is very useful in finding CCLC trainees study assignments in Canada, the purpose of a curriculum vitae in promoting an individual's skills in the marketplace is almost unknown in China. Instead, work placements and study arrangements are determined through examinations or recommendations.

Curriculum Implementation

To implement the new curriculum effectively, teacher training at the CCLC has had to emphasize the teaching of language learning strategies such as the ones described. The curriculum also has had to provide Chinese teachers with the cultural and experiential background that they need. Explanatory notes have been included in the curriculum.

In addition, another very effective method of transferring teaching knowledge has been the skill teams' meetings of the listening, speaking, reading, and writing teachers. Courchêne (1992a, 1992b) recorded how the skill teams provided teachers with an opportunity to discuss their concerns about the curriculum, and to develop supplementary materials.

Probably the most effective method to exchange skills and knowledge between the Canadian and Chinese teachers has been through team teaching. Smith (1991) noted that team teaching made both Chinese and Canadian teachers aware of their respective cultural and methodological differences, and that it sensitized Canadian teachers to the expectations of their Chinese trainees.

Considerable cultural sensitivity is needed on the part of both the Canadians and the Chinese for successful team teaching. Miner, Vulpe, and Lou (1990) found that the Canadian and Chinese teachers at the CCLC had fundamental differences in cultural values. Their attitudes towards individualism, efficiency, public criticism, and accuracy at the expense of group harmony were potential sources of friction.

Successful team teaching also relies on the personalities of different Canadian and Chinese teachers, each with different strengths and with varying amounts of teaching experience. The challenge has been in developing effective partnerships between Canadian and Chinese teachers.

Ultimately, it is hoped that the Chinese teachers using the curriculum developed by the CCLC will use a more communicative approach when they return to their language teaching duties in the Foreign Language Department at Beijing Normal University. In turn, perhaps the Canadian teachers will have a greater appreciation of the cultural differences between themselves and their Chinese counterparts and of the need to adapt to changing circumstances.

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Ensuring Comparability of CanTEST Scores

Margaret Des Brisay

When candidates speak of "the CanTEST" they are usually referring to a specific version of the test, the one they have just written or are about to write. However, for the CanTEST development team at the University of Ottawa's Second Language Institute, the term CanTEST refers to the whole inventory or *bank* of listening and reading subtests from which various versions of the tests, both French and English, are compiled; the specifications for generating these subtests; the rating scales used to assess oral and written production and the procedures used to train interviewers and writing test readers. Finally, it also includes the large body of test data which provides the basis for ensuring the continued quality of the test and the comparability of test scores for candidates who may have written different versions of the CanTEST at different testing sessions. In other words, for us, the CanTEST is not a test but a testing program, and a major concern for any testing program which employs multiple forms of a test is the question of test equating.

It is widely accepted that no test developer can produce versions of a test that are identical in difficulty, and so it is important to ensure that examinees who take a less difficult form of a test are not given an unwarranted advantage over examinees who take a more difficult form. In the case of the CanTEST (and TESTCan), this is accomplished by establishing first what, if any, difference in difficulty exists and then adjusting the conversion tables by which raw scores are converted to band scores accordingly. In other words, a candidate may need to score 32 out of 40 items correct to be placed in Band 5.0 for Listening Comprehension on one version but only 30 out of 40 on another.

Initially, standards for the CanTEST were derived from experience monitoring trainees in Canada rather than from a rigorous statistical process. Chinese teachers studying in Canada were also asked to go over each version and give their informed judgement about how many of the questions should be answered correctly by an adequately prepared examinee. Once it had been determined that examinees within a particular score range were reasonably certain to function successfully in their Canadian assignment (while those below would not), the task of the developers then became one of ensuring that each new version of the test leads to the same kinds of decisions about the routing of candidates. We need to know if one version is more difficult than another and by exactly how much. Just comparing the average score (the mean) for two versions of the test will not give us the answer. Obviously if there is a difference in the mean for two tests (TEST X and TEST Y), one possible explanation is that the test with the higher mean (say, TEST X) is easier. Unfortunately, it is also possible that the examinees who wrote TEST X were more proficient and the higher mean simply reflects this. When mean scores vary, how does a test developer determine how much of the difference results from a difference in the test and how much from differences in the test population? In order to answer this question, the developers must set up some process for relating scores on different versions and such a process involves some form of test equating.

The first step in undertaking an equating procedure is data collection. There are three basic designs for data collection. In Design A, two groups of examinees are formed by random assignment and each group writes a different form of the test. Random assignment is assumed to ensure that the two groups are equally proficient and hence differences in test performance can be attributed to differences in test difficulty. In Design B, all examinees write both versions and again any differences will be assumed to result from differences in test difficulty since the same examinees were involved for each version[1]. Design C is similar to Design A in that each version of the test is administered to a different group of examinees, but in Design C, the groups are not necessarily formed by random assignment. Instead, a certain number of items (approximately 20%) will be common to both versions. These common items are usually referred to as anchor items and they provide an empirical basis for determining the relative proficiency of the two groups of examinees. Design C is the most frequently used form of data collection as it does not require exposing examinees to two versions of the same test (exhausting for them and an increased security risk for the developer) nor does it, like Design A, depend on random assignment to groups.

Once data has been collected, the next step is to choose an equating procedure. Certain characteristics of the data will suggest the appropriate procedure to be used. Until recently, the two most common methods were linear equating and equipercentile equating. In linear equating, a function for computing equivalent scores on Test Y from scores on Test X was computed, making the assumption that score distributions are the same for both versions. Equipercentile equating, as the name implies, involves determining which scores on the two versions have the same percentile rank and treating them as equivalent. In recent years, large testing programs have turned to pre-equating methods which utilize item response theory (IRT)[2]. Although IRT offers many advantages, IRT estimates must be based on large samples (200 to 1000 field-testing subjects depending on the IRT model chosen) and is definitely too expensive and arguably not necessary for a small scale testing program like the CanTEST to use in its equating procedures.

Unfortunately, the cost of developing a test is the same whether it is to be used with 300 examinees, as is the case with the CanTEST, or 300,000. Equating *by the book* can be a very expensive procedure. Even the initial step of data collection poses problems for the small-scale test developer. The scarcity of appropriate field-testing subjects, the expense of paying them to take one version (much less two), and the security risks involved every time a test version is used usually means that much of the information necessary for determining the equivalence of different test versions (*and* the final revision of items) must be gathered during operational use of the test.

Does this mean we cannot do as good a job as the large testing programs? Not at all. In fact, we claim to be doing a better job. Clearly data from real testing sessions where results count are better than data from an experimental use of a test. Moreover, CanTEST developers have *external* criteria against which to measure the accuracy of the equating. We have scores from the oral and writing tests which are not subject to variations in difficulty from test session to test session and, in the case of the internal candidates, we have teachers' judgements based on 18 weeks of classroom observation. This is not the case in most large testing programs where nothing is known about the candidates except their scores on a particular version of the test. In such cases, equating procedures must be statistically rigorous because there is no way of checking to see if it is right.

So what do we do to ensure that the same decisions affecting a candidate's future will be made no matter which version of the CanTEST s/he happens to write? First of all, it should be noted that each new version of the CanTEST is a combination of previously used and newly developed material. We have descriptive statistics on all the previously used material (means, standard deviations, reliability indices) against which to compare the performance of the same material on the new version. This is in some ways similar to Design C mentioned above in that a set of the common items will have been taken on two different occasions by two different groups of examinees. Strictly speaking, the comparisons would only be valid if the previously used items appeared in exactly the same form and in the same place as they had done on the earlier version and if these items were representative of the test as a whole. Again this creates problems for the small-scale testing programs like CanTEST. For one thing, all CanTEST items are actually sets of 5 to 10 items related to a particular passage and are not as interchangeable as single items based on single sentence prompts. Moreover, it frequently happens that information obtained from operational use of a subtest suggests ways in which that subtest could be improved. We would not want to use a subtest in its original but less than perfect form just to satisfy the requirements of an equating procedure, and so we must supplement this kind of information with other data, both empirical and judgemental. Nevertheless, these comparisons give us a good start and the initial conversion tables are largely based on comparisons of means obtained by field testing subjects on previously used material with means obtained by the same subjects on newly developed material.

Once the new version has been administered (in January and July of each year), we look for any evidence suggesting that the provisional conversion tables (the cut-scores for each band level) need adjusting. This stage involves close cooperation between the staff at the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) in Beijing and the CanTEST developers at the University of Ottawa. The following list shows the kind of questions we might ask.

- Is the distribution of scores for both writing and speaking similar to previous test sessions? That is, do we have a similar percentage scoring Band 5, Band 4, etc.?
- Does the overall proficiency of the candidates presenting themselves for oral interviews at this session seem to be similar to previous sessions or do they seem weaker or stronger?
- How did the performance of this set of examinees on previously used subtests compare to earlier statistics for these subtests[3]?
- How do the band scores derived from the provisional conversion table compare with the band scores predicted by teachers who have had an opportunity to observe these candidates over the previous semester? Did the majority of trainees predicted to get Band 4 or more in fact do so? Or would a slight adjustment in the cut-off score for Band 4 result in a better fit with teachers' predictions?

No equating procedure can be expected to yield perfect decision consistency. At present, the CanTEST team has undertaken a research project to compare results obtained from various equating procedures taken over different equating conditions in order to confirm that our system is working as well as we would like. Such work is only one of several research projects connected with the CanTEST. We have come to realize that construction of the initial CanTEST was not nearly as difficult as setting up a process for renewing and revising the test, establishing empirically the reliability, validity and comparability of different versions and maintaining test security.

Endnotes

1. In Design B, care must be taken to control for any differences in test order by randomizing the order in which any one candidate writes the two versions.

2. The use of IRT in item revision and the setting of cut-off scores for the CanTEST has been reported on in Des Brisay and Laurier, 1991.

3. For example, the cloze passage used in June, 1988 and again in July, 1990 had the identical mean and standard deviation both times, permitting us to conclude that the examinees in July, 1990 were very similar to those in June, 1988. We could thus estimate the relative difficulty of the new material on the test and arrive at an appropriate cut-off score. On the other hand, the cloze passage used in January, 1991 had a considerably lower mean than it had had when previously used (January, 1989) confirming that the January, 1991 test population, which included a large percentage of short term trainees, was less proficient overall. Again, this information is necessary for estimating the relative difficulty of old and new material.

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Rôle des connaissances antérieures dans la compréhension des textes en français L2 chez des apprenants chinois

Wang Ruihua

Introduction

L'objectif de la présente recherche était d'observer le rôle des connaissances antérieures des lecteurs sur la compréhension de textes écrit en français L2 auprès des stagiaires chinois, qui éprouvaient de nombreuses difficultés, en apprenant le français en situation de classe en Chine. A cette fin, une recherche a été menée auprès de huit médecins chinois, respectivement spécialistes dans un des domaines de la médecine. Dans un premier temps de cet écrit, le lecteur y trouvera notamment une partie qui expose l'origine de ce travail et l'importance de la lecture. Dans la seconde partie, je proposerai une méthodologie en décrivant le déroulement de notre expérimentation. La troisième partie tentera de présenter nos résultats de cette étude.

Origine de la recherche

J'enseignais la lecture en français (compréhension écrite) au Centre Linguistique Canada-Chine (CLCC) à Beijing depuis des années. Comme professeur de français L2, j'avais observé que les apprenants, lorsqu'ils entraient au Centre, éprouvaient de grandes difficultés à bien faire les lectures indispensables dans leurs études. Certains se plaignaient de la trop grande quantité de lectures demandées par les professeurs; certains avaient de la peine à identifier l'idée principale du texte. Les capacités de lecture des apprenants étaient ainsi plutôt réduites et ils n'arrivaient surtout pas à mettre en pratique les quelques connaissances qu'ils possédaient déjà, au moment d'accomplir les nouvelles tâches qui leur étaient assignées dans le cours de compréhension écrite.

À première vue, tout laisse supposer qu'un apprenant, qui n'a pas atteint un certain seuil de compétence linguistique, ne peut tout simplement pas comprendre certains textes. Et inversement, celui qui possède un bon bagage linguistique pourrait arriver à comprendre de tels textes. Cependant l'expérience en classe nous avait montré que ce n'était pas toujours le cas. En effet, lorsqu'on examinait de plus près, on s'apercevait que la complexité textuelle n'était qu'un élément isolé. La dimension des connaissances antérieures des lecteurs constituait également un élément non négligeable. Pour vérifier si la compréhension de textes français par des apprenants chinois varie selon la nature du texte et selon les connaissances antérieures du lecteur, l'idée nous est venue de mener une réflexion plus approfondie sur cette question, d'autant plus que nous travaillions avec un public relativement homogène, à savoir des médecins chinois. Ils ont été invité de lire trois types de textes différents en français: 1) un texte médical; 2) un texte relatant un fait divers; et 3) un texte publicitaire.

Importance de la lecture

Pour tout ceux qui apprennent une langue étrangère, la maitrise de la langue en question implique plusieurs composantes, dont celle de pouvoir lire

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dans cette langue et arriver à la comprendre de texte de nature diverse. Bien que l'avènement de l'approche communicative en Chine ait correspondu à une importance accrue accordée à la communication orale, l'enseignement de l'écrit n'a pas pour autant perdu sa place dans les pratiques pédagogiques actuelles. La lecture occupe ainsi une place importante dans la classe de L2.

Vigner (1979) souligne l'importance de la lecture en L2 dans les termes suivants: *On a pu noter en effet qu'un grand nombre d'élèves étudiant le français n'auraient jamais de contacts directs avec des locuteurs francophones en situation de communication orale en face à face, et que, dans bien des cas, le contact se ferait uniquement par le moyen de textes écrits. Il apparaissait donc plus utile de développer l'aptitude à la compréhension des textes écrits que l'expression orale.*

Bertin (1988) partage à sa manière cette opinion en affirmant que dans la classe de L2, la place de l'écrit et plus particulièrement de la lecture doit prendre son importance, puisque *selon sa situation géographique, l'apprenant aura parfois peu l'occasion d'utiliser oralement la L2 en dehors du contexte scolaire et à l'issue de son apprentissage. Dans de nombreux cas, le texte écrit est le seul lien qu'il sera en mesure de conserver avec la langue.*

La lecture est d'autant plus importante pour les apprenants chinois qui étudient le français L2 en Chine qu'elle constitue pour eux un instrument privilégié, sinon décisif, pour effectuer des études. Car chacun sait que nos étudiants n'ont pas accès à un milieu francophone en dehors de la classe et qu'ainsi ils ne peuvent pas beaucoup pratiquer la L2 après les heures de cours. La lecture devient ainsi un moyen essentiel auquel ils peuvent avoir recours pour rester en contact avec la L2 qu'ils sont en train d'apprendre. La lecture est aussi le seul moyen dont ils disposent par la suite (une fois le cours terminé) pour continuer d'approfondir leurs connaissances du français. Les conditions d'aprentissage du français L2 n'était pas idéales, il est donc capital de tout mettre en oeuvre pour que leur lecture soit la meilleure et la plus efficace possible.

Depuis plusieures années déjà, les recherches dans le domaine des sciences du langage sont non seulement nombreuses mais sont aussi fructueuses. En ce qui concerne les recherches sur la compréhension en lecture, les conceptions ont beaucoup évolué au cours de la dernière décennie. Traditionnellement on limitait la compréhension d'un texte à des éléments relevant de la compétence linguistique. La lecture apparaissait comme un processus linéaire et purement linguistique. Aujourd'hui, de nouveaux modèles théoriques ont présenté la lecture comme un processus interactionnel entre un lecteur et un texte. Il devient alors essentiel de prendre en compte autant le décodage du texte en unité linguistique que le décodage global du texte dont le sens est aperçu aussi à l'aide des connaissances antérieures du lecteur.

Déroulement de l'expérimentation

1. La population

La population retenue pour notre étude comportait huit médecins se différenciant par leur âge et leur niveau de compétence en français. Ils étaient très spécialisés dans un des domaines de la médecine. Ils avaient tous reçu une formation supérieure dans le domaine médical et avaient acquis une grande expérience professionnelle.

Leur niveau de connaissance du français était assez restreint et varié à l'intérieur du groupe puisque certains étaient débutants et d'autres étaient de niveau faux-débutant. Aucun d'entre eux n'avaient eu l'occasion d'entrer en contact avec un locuteur natif de la langue cible1 avant d'être admis au programme de français au CLCC.

2. Démarche

Nous avons demandé à ces médecins chinois de lire trois textes de contenu différent, à savoir un texte médical, un texte sur un fait divers et un texte publicitaire. Chaque sujet a passé l'ensemble de l'épreuve individuellement. Il disposait de quatre heures pour traduire les contenus en chinois. Chacun a lu attentivement les trois textes, et à l'aide du dictionnaire français-chinois. Après la passation de l'épreuve, chaque sujet a passé une entrevue. Au cour de cette entrevue chacun a livré ses commentaires et ses impressions générales sur la difficulté des trois textes qu'il venait juste de finir de lire. Il devait ensuite classer ces trois textes par ordre de difficulté. Il devait enfin, essayer de justifier pourquoi selon lui un texte donné était facile ou difficile.

Résultats de la recherche

A la suite de toutes nos analyses portant sur les résultats de ces trois textes, il ressort que le texte médical donne lieu à une performance supérieure par rapport au texte de publicité et à celui de faits divers. Non seulement les médecins ont eu des résultats meilleures mais les différences ont été plus marquées. Il y a donc effectivement eu un effet des connaissances antérieures pour la compréhension des textes. Cela confirme le fait que les connaissances antérieures qui sont mieux organisées facilitent le rappel des informations du texte médical. En effet, cette meilleure performance est plutôt imputable sur leurs connaissances appropriées du domaine médecine, mais rarement à des indices textuels.

Comme l'expliquaient nos aprenants: " Même pour des phrases qui ne se lisent pas aisément, je suis capable d'interpréter leur sens en recourant à mes connaissances en médecine ". Ceci nous fait penser que les connaissances antérieures reliées au contenu du texte affectent significativement la compréhension en lecture de textes français chez des apprenants chinois qui apprennent le français comme langue étrangère. Les difficultés d'apprentissage de lecture en français L2 chez les apprenants chinois ne se limitent pas à la compétence linguistique. S'il n'exite pas de connaissances préalables, aucun lien ne pourra s'établire entre les significations linguistiques et le contenu sémantique.

Conclusion

Les problèmes de compréhension en lecture peuvent se situer au niveau de connaissances initiales et aussi au niveau linguistique. Les deux facteurs dominent les résultats. Dans notre cas, les connaissances antérieures sur le thème familier, celui de texte médical, avait effectivement agi sur la compréhension de textes.

De ce fait on voit que pour l'enseignement et l'apprentissage du français L2 en Chine, le choix des textes doit s'appuyer sur les besoins et les connaissances préalables des apprenants. Comme l'indique Moirand (1977), *le critère de choix des documents n'est pas le niveau linguistique des étudiants mais leurs connaissances des faits extra-linguistique.* Car, les textes de contenu familier facilitent l'établissement des liens nécessaires chez le lecteur tout en éveillant ses connaissances préalables. Une lecture efficace dépendrait en grande partie des textes qui sont proposés aux apprenants. Ainsi, une bonne préparation de classe implique que le choix des textes repose non seulement sur des phénomènes formels, mais aussi sur des connaissances antérieures des lecteurs. Enfin, il serait souhaitable que le présent travail puisse avoir une certaine portée d'ordre pédagogique.

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Comparaison des deux approches pédagogiques utilisées au Centre Linguistique Canada-Chine et au Département des Langues étrangères

He Xin

Introduction

Cette présentation ne tentera pas d'aborder la grande théorie, elle présentera plutôt ma courte pratique de l'enseignement du français au Département des Langues Étrangères de l'Université Normale de Pékin (DLE) et au Centre Linguistique Canada-Chine (CLCC) de la même université. Dans ces deux postes, j'ai été en contact et utilisé deux méthodes d'enseignement assez différentes. Ainsi, j'aimerais vous faire part de mes réflexions personnelles. Cette présentation consistera en deux parties. Dans un premier temps, je ferai une présentation du DLE et du CLCC. La seconde partie tentera de décrire les avantages et les désavantages des approches utilisées.

Présentation du DLE et du CLCC

1. Administration et mission

Le DLE est l'un des dix-huit départements de l'Université Normale de Pékin. Il est totalement géré par un personnel chinois. Il a pour but d'assumer la tâche de former des professeurs de langues étrangères pour les universités chinoises et aussi les lycées. Il y a trois spécialités, à savoir l'anglais, le japonais et le russe. Le français est enseigné comme une seconde langue étrangère aux étudiants chinois qui apprennent l'anglais. A partir de la troisième année universitaire, ces derniers doivent en choisir obligatoirement.

Le CLCC est administré dans une collaboration sino-canadienne, soit l'Université Normale de Pékin et l'Université Saint-Mary's d'Halifax. Créé par l'Agence Canadienne de Développement International (ACDI), il assume deux mandats principaux. L'un est de faire une évaluation de compétence linguistique aux candidats qui iront au Canada et l'autre, qui consiste sa tâche importante, est d'offrir une formation linguistique et culturelle pour ceux qui dont le niveau linguistique est encore trop limité pour se rendre directement au Canada.

2. Caractéristiques des étudiants

Les étudiants du DLE sont des adolescents de 19 à 20 ans. Ils ne sont pas très motivés dans l'apprentissage du français. Deux raisons peuvent expliquer cet effet. D'une part, avant d'entrer à l'université, ils ont mis beaucoup de temps à se préparer et à travailler. Même les heures de distraction étaient souvent contribuées à cette fin. Une fois entrés à l'université, ils pensent bien que c'est le temps de se reposer et de récupérer pour toutes leurs pertes. En plus, à la fin de leurs études, bons ou mauvais résultats, ils pourront tous recevoir un travail stable pour la vie. D'autre part, l'utilisation du français très limitée diminue fortement leur intérêt puisqu'ils auront rarement l'occasion d'en servir dans leur futur travail. Ainsi, ils manquent souvent d'initiative et sont passifs en classe.

Contrairement à ce qu'on peut observer dans le DLE, les étudiants du CLCC sont des adultes professionnels. Certains d'entre eux occupent des postes importants et même supérieurs dans leurs unités de travail. Ce sont des candidats qui vont participer à des programmes d'études ou effectuer des stages de travail subventionnés par l'ACDI. Au CLCC, ils reçoivent une formation linguistique et culturelle afin de se préparer pour leur séjour au Canada. Donc, ils sont très motivés. Ils travaillent fort et sont responsables, autonomes et très actifs en classe.

3. Méthodes d'enseignement utilisées

Au DLE, la méthode dite traditionnelle occupe une place importante. L'enseignement est centré sur le maître et le manuel. Le professeur représente le coeur du cours, il domine pour la plupart du temps la classe et c'est lui aussi, qui a toujours la parole. Il explique les mots inconnus, il analyse la grammaire, et identifie l'idée principale de chaque paragraphe du texte. Ensuite, il fait faire des exercices structuraux, grammaticaux, thème ou version. Quant aux étudiants, ils doivent répéter et mémoriser les mots, réciter les phrases-clés et les expressions, ils veulent tout retenir par coeur. Petit à petit, ils s'habituent à être passifs, à suivre totalement l'ordre et les démarches du professeur. Ils manquent d'initiative à participer aux activités en classe.

D'ailleurs, nous n'avons pas de locuteurs natifs. Les trois professeurs de français sont des Chinois. Ainsi, les étudiants n'ont pas de chance d'entendre le vrai accent français. Au plan pédagogique, les professeurs discutent très rarement du programme d'enseignement, du manuel, ou des problèmes auxquels nous devons faire face.

Au CLCC, l'approche communicative occupe une place privilégiée. S'inspirant de cette approche, l'enseignement est centré sur l'apprenant et ses besoins. Nous attachons de l'importance sur les fonctions langagières requises par les stagiaires lors de leur séjour au Canada, plutôt que sur les analyses grammaticales, syntaxiques et lexiques. Notre but à atteindre est d'amener l'apprenant à améliorer son efficacité et ses habiletés pour communiquer à l'écrit et à l'oral en répondant aux besoins académiques, professionnels et sociaux dans le milieu québécois.

A partir de cet objectif, nous choisissons nos textes avec beaucoup de soin en respectant les thèmes, tels que: le Canada et la Chine, la géographie, le travail, l'éducation, la médecine, la société, les loisirs, etc. La bibliothèque du Centre possède une grande quantité de ressources didactiques et un centre d'auto-apprentissage pour les étudiants. Désirant réussir à tout prix, les étudiants demandent toujours des exercices complémentaires qui peuvent répondre aux exigences du Test.

Pour que les étudiants acquièrent l'habitude de parler en français, ils suivent les cours complètement en français, et ils sont encouragés de toujours parler en français pendant et après la classe. Dans la classe, ce n'est pas le professeur qui a toujours la parole, il joue plutôt le rôle d'animateur. La plupart du temps, ce sont nos étudiants qui sont en activités. Le professeur donne le moins d'explications possible mais assez pour procurer aux étudiants un bon encadrement.

Au plan pédagogique, nous discutons souvent de problèmes didactiques, échangeons des avis concernant l'approche utilisée en classe et partageons la joie de vivre, c'est l'esprit français. Quand nous avons des difficultés dans le travail, notre collègue canadienne française est toujours prête à prêter la main forte.

Avantages et désavantages des deux approches utilisées

1. Sur le plan du principe

L'approche traditionnelle telle que je l'ai expérimentée en Chine attache de l'importance à l'exactitude de la langue elle-même. C'est la compétence linguistique qui prime. Le professeur corrige à tout moment les fautes des étudiants, ce fait étouffe des fois l'enthousiasme de ces derniers. Mais il faut souligner ici qu'elle a connu pas mal de succès. Surtout pour les débutants adultes, elle permet aux étudiants d'avoir une base assez solide concernant les connaissances fondamentales. C'est vrai qu'ils parlent moins couramment, mais généralement, les phrases sont bien faites.

L'approche communicative s'attache au "coulant" plutôt qu'à exactitude. Elle souligne les fonctions langagières dans la communication. Au fil de l'apprentissage, c'est tout à fait normal que les étudiants fassent des fautes lors de leur apprentissage. Elle encourage les étudiants à parler sans préoccupant trop de leurs fautes. C'est comme ça qu'on fait des progrès.

2. La relation entre le professeur et l'étudiant

Dans l'approche traditionnelle, le professeur est le coeur de la classe, il domine la classe et donne beaucoup d'explications. Les étudiants le suivent et lui "obéissent". Ils se soumettent à ce qu'il arrange. L'ambiance n'est pas vivante. Les étudiants sont passifs et manquent d'initiative. En plus, ils ont peu de temps pour pratiquer en classe.

Dans l'approche communicative telle que je la comprends, l'étudiant est le centre de la classe. L'étudiant découvre comment étudier une langue par lui-même. Il doit être capable de s'orienter, de découvrir son propre processus d'apprentissage et de s'y adapter. Le professeur joue plutôt le rôle d'animateur et d'organisateur. Il stimule, encourage et évalue l'apprentissage et le cheminement de l'étudiant. Tout cela est exigeant pour les professeurs. Leur niveau de langue doit être excellent. Ils doivent bien connaitre la didactique, et aussi posséder d'excellentes connaissances psychologiques.

3. Le contenu de l'enseignement

L'approche traditionnelle met beaucoup d'accent sur la grammaire et la phrase-type. Les textes sont rédigés et remaniés pour faire ressortir la grammaire. Comme le texte est trop centré sur un point grammatical, la langue semble souvent artificielle et sonne faux. Des fois, dans le texte, le vocabulaire et les connaissances sont déjà désuets.

L'approche communicative exige l'authenticité du matériel qui répond à la vie pratique. Par exemple, les publicités, la carte du métro, les horaires de train, tout cela fait partie du matériel didactique authentique. En conséquence, l'étudiant est tout de suite mis en contact du matériel authentique et ceci lui rend certainement l'apprentissage de la langue plus naturel.

4. Le processus pédagogique

On peut décrire l'ordre de l'approche traditionnelle comme suit: l'introduction d'un point grammatical; exercices mécaniques; exercices dans le contexte. Il faut reconnaître que cette méthode est nécessaire dans la période de base. Si l'étudiant manque de connaissances fondamentales, il lui serait difficile de s'exprimer précisément.

L'ordre de l'approche communicative est: communiquer le plus possible en utilisant les connaissances acquises; introduire le point langagier indispensable pour communiquer efficacement; faire encore des exercices s'il est nécessaire. Il faut placer les apprenants dans les situations de communication.

Si on compare les deux approches, l'étudiant de l'approche traditionnelle acquiert généralement une base linguistique solide, mais sa capacité de communiquer reste souvent faible, ses connaissances sont un peu limitées. Dans l'approche communicative, au terme de ses études de langue, l'apprenant s'exprimera et fonctionnera plus adéquatement lors de son séjour à l'étranger. Ainsi, il pourra mieux réussir son stage de travail ou d'étude. Également, il se sentira plus à son aise dans la langue cible et pourra davantage participer à la vie sociale des gens. En fait, ce que je désire réellement est de faire une heureuse synthèse des deux approches.

Conclusion

Je suis une jeune enseignante, mon expérience d'enseignement est encore très limitée. De plus, je n'ai pas encore fait de grandes recherches en pédagogie. Selon mes réflexions personnelles, je trouve que l'approche communicative est une meilleure méthode pour l'enseignement d'une langue étrangère. Elles est plus efficace et liée plus étroitement à la pratique. En Chine, on a déjà commencé à utiliser l'approche communicative dans l'enseignement des langues étrangères, mais étant donné la situation en Chine, je trouve que l'utilisation complète de l'approche communicative ne semble pas très réaliste ni adéquate pour les adultes chinois. En résumé, force nous est donc de conclure que les deux approches ne peuvent qu'être complémentaires et que l'une et l'autre feraient mieux d'être combinée pour avoir un maximum de rendement dans notre enseignement.

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Designing Diagnostic Instruments for Teaching Pronunciation

Jennifer St. John

Within the context of developing the ability to speak a second language, the aspect of mastering the sound system and its pronunciation is often of primary interest to the language learner. Similarly, a course designed specifically to teach *speaking* is often expected to assist language learners in developing a certain degree of phonetic and phonological accuracy which will lead in part to greater overall intelligibility[1]. In order to develop such a course, the teacher must consider the needs of the students (i.e., proficiency level, level of awareness of sound system, purpose for improving pronunciation[2]). (See Firth, 1987b; & Wong, 1987a for discussion of learner variables in syllabus design.) In addition, the teacher needs to establish a descriptive profile of the students' ability to pronounce in the second language. This may be achieved by obtaining a sample of *speech* from each student followed by an analysis, but should also involve the gathering of information about each individual student's understanding of the sound system[3], ability to *hear* the sound system, and ability to monitor his/her own production. This paper will briefly describe methods used for the collection of this information in addition to the advantages and disadvantages of some of these methods.

The Need for Diagnostic Information

One resource available to the pronunciation teacher is the numerous documents in which contrastive analyses have been made between languages (Kenworthy, 1987; Nilsen & Nilsen in Firth, 1971; Trager, 1982; Trager & Henderson, 1983). Contrastive analyses of sound systems offer a starting point for predicting students' pronunciation problems. However, there are shortcomings of contrastive analyses which create the need to obtain diagnostic information about each individual student. First, contrastive analyses may predict many potential problem areas but fall short in providing information about a student's idiosyncratic pronunciation strengths and weaknesses. For example, a contrastive analysis may predict the problem of discrimination and production of the phonemes /l/ and /r/ for a particular student. However, the student may have already mastered this distinction and thus would not require further training in this area. Another student may not be able to distinguish between /w/ and /r/; yet, contrastive analysis might not predict this particular problem. Second, if the students come from a variety of linguistic/dialectal backgrounds, synthesizing information from a number of contrastive analyses may be extremely time consuming. Admittedly, this would not pose a problem in the context of teaching linguistically homogeneous groups of students. A final reason for not relying solely on contrastive analyses is the lack of availability of analyses for all students' linguistic backgrounds.

Similar to the premise which underlies applying contrastive analyses to second language course design, obtaining diagnostic information about each student has as its primary objective the purpose of helping the teacher determine the actual content of a given pronunciation course (Firth, 1987b; Wong, 1987b). Teaching the complete sound system of any language can prove to be extremely complex and unnecessarily complicated for the teacher and students. By obtaining diagnostic information about the students, certain aspects of the sound system may be eliminated from the syllabus or treated in a less thorough manner.

In addition to helping establish course content, the collection of diagnostic information plays an essential role in meeting the objective of encouraging student involvement and developing self-monitoring strategies (Wong, 1987b). Equipped with individual descriptive pronunciation profiles, the students become motivated to focus on personal achievement and develop strategies in monitoring and assessing their own level of accomplishment. When diagnostic information is gathered at the beginning, middle and conclusion of a course, both teacher and students are able to determine and adjust individual expectations and future orientations.

Type of Diagnostic Information

As mentioned previously, the type of information a teacher and students require to accurately determine individual needs and to set realistic goals for improvement originates from more than recordings of students' speaking. Essentially, there are at least four sources of information a teacher needs to tap to arrive at a complete diagnostic profile. First of all, a student's previous linguistic training in general phonetics and in the second language's sound system are important to assess - a teacher should be aware of the degree of metalinguistic awareness the student possesses. This information will help the teacher determine, for instance, the amount of detail necessary in describing certain phonological phenomena to the class.

A second source of information required is the student's level of auditory discrimination or ability to *hear* the sound system. The rationale for this may be obvious. If the student is unable to detect a difference in phonemes, for example, the student may not be able to produce such a distinction. In addition, it is important to access the student's ability to *hear* the language given the interdependency of listening and speaking in oral interactions (Gilbert, 1984, 1987).

A third type of information to assess is the student's ability to monitor his/her own production of the sound system. Is the student able to identify his/her own *errors*? Certainly, the student's ability to *hear* the language and understand the system plays a major role in the ability to monitor his/her own production. Often, a student will be able to identify problem areas, however he/she will need instruction on what the source of the problem is and how to correct it.

The final type of information to gather is an assessment of the student's ability to produce the sound system. This type of assessment may be done on a global basis or with reference to specific phenomena of the sound system. Accessing this type of information is not quite as straightforward as it may first appear. The sample of *speech* needs to be as reflective of the student's natural use of the language as possible. Once a sample (or samples) has been obtained, it needs to be analyzed in a manner which will yield the maximum information possible.

These four types of diagnostic information inform both the teacher and the student about the student's strengths and weaknesses in his/her attempt to master the pronunciation system, information which is essential to the development of an effective pronunciation course.

Designing Diagnostic Instruments

When designing an instrument for gathering any type of diagnostic information, there are a number of factors to bear in mind. From a practical point of view, the time, equipment and complexity of the task all affect the ease of administering the instrument. In order to ensure the content validity of the instrument, the sample of language elicited or used as a stimulus should be representative of the student's targeted use of the language. Finally, the method of analysis used to evaluate the sample of performance and the diagnostic information obtained should be easily interpretable for the teacher and the student.

The first type of information, that of previous linguistic training, can be obtained by interviewing the students individually or by means of a questionnaire. The information included in such a task would relate to the following; a) amount and type (i.e. personal, professional, academic) of contact the student has had with native speakers of the language and the dialectal origins of these speakers, b) formal and informal language training background, c) knowledge of other languages, and d) self-evaluation of pronunciation weaknesses and known strategies used to compensate for these weaknesses.

To assess a student's ability to *hear* the language, the teacher may approach the task by using a discrete point format or one which is more integrative in nature. A discrete point format might ask the student to consider the difference he/she hears in a minimal pair set (i.e. *pat* and *bat*). Such a task would assess the student's ability to hear *voiced/voiceless* consonant distinctions. Another type of question might involve drawing the intonation contour for a pair of minimally distinct sentences. For example, *She likes coffee* vs. *She likes coffee?*. A more integrative approach to auditory discrimination might involve a listening cloze passage (based on an authentic radio broadcast) in which the blanks are selected on the basis of degree of syllable reduction. This task would require more than one level of processing. Not only would phonetic information be needed to respond, but also an understanding of the context in which the blank appears. Samples of these two types of tasks are illustrated in the *Clear Listening Test* (Gilbert, 1984). Such tasks are extremely informative and instructive. However, a certain amount of training may be required in order for the students to become familiar with the conventions or diacritics often used to indicate their answers (i.e. how to mark a stressed syllable or draw an intonation contour). It is also necessary to ensure that the level of lexical complexity of the tasks is not beyond the level of students.

Dictation and transcriptions of authentic recordings may also yield information about a student's auditory ability. However, if the passage selected for dictation or transcription is not challenging enough, very little information may be gathered as the student may be able to compensate for auditory weaknesses by using other types of linguistic information such as contextual and structural clues.

The third type of instrument, one which involves obtaining a recorded speech sample, can have many different formats. However, regardless of format, the common purpose is to obtain as natural a speech sample as possible. These formats can be categorized according to the degree to which the student has freedom of expression, ranging from completely controlled and semi-controlled tasks to free speech[4].

The most controlled task is one which is traditionally used in pronunciation courses. A written passage is given to the student to read silently and then to read for recording. The passage is selected for its sampling of the segmental and suprasegmental components of the sound system (see Prator & Robinett, 1972, for example). The advantages of using this type of task include the following: all students attempt the same passage (consequently the students are not at a loss for words); a complete range of possible problem areas can be assessed; and, the method of analysis is simplified by having a predetermined script for all samples. However, such a task often produces unnatural intonation, rhythm and speed of delivery as well as errors induced by an unfamiliar or misleading orthography (MacCarthy, 1978; Wong, 1987b).

Semi-controlled tasks are primarily ones which control one variable, that is the topic or content of the speech sample. Such tasks might include having the student a) describe a sequence of pictures which depict a story (see Heaton, 1966, for examples); b) describe a scene so that a listener might be able to draw it (See Yorkey, 1985 for examples); c) interpret a photograph; d) comment and give an opinion on a short text (see Wright, 1984, for additional suggestions). The advantage of this task type is the naturalness of the sample elicited and the lack of influence of orthography on the sample. All students have the same field of lexical items to produce but each student produces his/her own personalized sample. The key to the success of this task type is the introduction of purpose and audience, both of which contribute to the naturalness of the sample. The primary disadvantage of this task type can be the students' lexical and structural deficiencies in attempting to verbally represent what is before them. To compensate for this, a student can be given more time to prepare, or a choice of stimuli for the task.

Free or spontaneous speech tasks differ from semi-controlled ones as there is usually no commonality in content among students' speech samples. The primary objective of free discourse tasks is the communication of ideas on a given topic. All discourse tasks identify a purpose, an audience, and/or a focus for the oral interaction. Essentially, spontaneous speech samples originate from any type of oral interaction (i.e. monologue, dialogue, debates, discussions). They may be completely spontaneous or prepared to a certain extent (as in a formal class presentation). Such a task yields a truly representative sample[5].

Semi-controlled and spontaneous speech tasks have one disadvantage. Because of the lack of a predetermined script prior to analyzing a semi-controlled or spontaneous speech sample recording, the teacher usually needs to transcribe the recording and then analyze it for strengths and weaknesses. Unfortunately, this can be extremely time consuming.

Regardless of the task type, all samples need to be analyzed. Analysis can be a challenging task for the teacher. The validity of the analysis hinges directly on the level of training and expertise of the teacher. There are a number of approaches one can take to do an analysis. However, there are at least two points to remember when analyzing a recorded performance. The first is to clearly define the parameters of the analysis (i.e. Is it an initial, global analysis, or one which focuses on one particular aspect of the pronunciation system?). The second is to use an analysis system which is efficiently and easily manipulated and provides the maximum of information to the teacher and the student. Related to the choice of analysis system is the number of repetitions required to complete the analysis. Numerous repetitions can be potentially confusing and often encourage the teacher to focus on minute problems rather than identify more salient problem areas.

The analysis of speech samples provides a wealth of information not only about the student's pronunciation errors but also his/her strengths. A student's strengths should not be overlooked or taken for granted as maintaining a strong self-image is essential to improving the student's pronunciation.

When information gathered in the analysis is shared with the student it may be presented in an oral format (either a face to face interview or in a recording at the end of the recorded sample) and/or it may be presented in a written report format. Methods to analyze a sample include using a checklist (see Firth, 1987b for a sample chart and Wong, 1987b for a list) or an annotated script of the sample followed by a summary of the findings.

The fourth type of diagnostic information a teacher might access is the student's ability to self-evaluate and monitor his/her performance. Essentially, the purpose of such a task is to find out if the student has developed a certain degree of self-awareness. Tasks to assess this might include: dictations, delivered by the teacher and corrected by the student; transcriptions of the student's own recordings analyzed by the student; and, video-recordings analyzed by the student. The success of such a task may not be realized initially at the beginning of a course, but may yield more information once the student is better equipped with explicit strategies for assessing his/her own sample and other recordings.

Conclusion

By gathering information about the students' previous linguistic training, self-awareness, ability to *hear* the sound system in addition to samples of speech, the teacher as course developer and instructor is equipped to make the decisions needed in delivering a course which will meet the needs of a group of second language learners, a course which will undoubtedly be more meaningful, effective, and efficient for the students. Such a course will thus provide a realistic framework within which to begin work on self-monitoring strategies and for setting personal goals for improvement, both essential skills for the language learner when taking more responsibility for his/her improvement and increased intelligibility.

Endnotes

1. A student's "accent" is composed of not only pronunciation weaknesses but also interlingual structures. To try to separate these two types of "errors" is not always possible and not always desirable. Developing an awareness of the interdependency of these "errors" often leads to well-placed self-monitoring strategies on the part of the student.

2. Two very different reasons for improvement may exist among the students. The first is a desire to simply "perfect" one's accent in order not to be recognized immediately as a non-native speaker of the language. The second is for reasons of intelligibility and communicative effectiveness.

3. By sound system, I am referring to not only the segmentals (i.e. individual sounds) of the language but also the suprasegmentals (i.e. rhythm, intonation, linking, etc.).

4. Wennerstorm (1992) also refers to this type of categorization of task types for eliciting speech samples in an academic context.

5. Morley (1988) suggests adding a further dimension to such a sample. This would include a video-recording of the sample thus allowing the diagnosis to include non-verbal information.

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Starting from Scratch:
Building the Nanchong Extension Centre

Ann Smith and Zeng Yanyi

Introduction

In China over the past ten years, many organizations have been parachuting teachers into remote universities and colleges to teach English. The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) has faced this challenge on several occasions during its lifespan: in 1988 at Jiaotong University in Xi'an; in 1989-90, at the People's University in Beijing and most recently at the Southwest Petroleum Institute (SWPI) in Nanchong, Sichuan.

The CCLC/SWPI Extension Centre (CCLC/SWPI) is the first long-term extension centre, and its task is to provide English language training for the Oil and Gas Technology Transfer Programme (OGTTP). The five units involved will send several hundred people in total to Canada for formal training and professional attachments over a period of eight years.

The experience of establishing an extension centre at a remote Sichuan university has presented both challenges and frustrations for those involved. Lessons have been learned that can be passed along to others planning to establish language training centres in remote areas and to language teachers planning to parachute into remote areas of China. In this article, the pre-planning involved in a new centre and issues related to the organization and day-to-day running of the centre at SWPI will be assessed and discussed.

Contract Negotiations

Any program is tied to the decisions and funding agreed to in the original contract negotiations. Generally development projects are approved prior to language training commencing. However the OGTTP agreement proposed beginning language training at an extension centre before the details of the project were completed and the Canadian CEA was announced. This arrangement should ensure that trainees have gained language skills by the time the project is finalized and trainees are required to go to Canada. However, it has also had other unforeseen effects.

The contract for the OGTTP was negotiated between Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade (MFERT), China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). CIDA provides funding for the OGTTP and is also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the project. CNPC is responsible through the five involved centres for candidate selection and status designation[1]. Another project, the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program (CCLCP) at Saint Mary's University (SMU), provides the language training, including the Canadian teacher, the curriculum, language resources, access to the CanTEST and the coordination through CCLC Beijing. SWPI is the host institution.

Pre-planning

The CCLC/SWPI had no pre-planning stage as classes were begun by SWPI in September, 1990, and the CCLC became involved in October, 1990. In hindsight, appropriate pre-planning by the implementors is essential as it saves many later hours of problem-solving. When planning an extension centre, it is essential to agree on the contributions of the implementing agencies, on the host university's contribution and the balance between the host (SWPI) and the provider's (CCLC) roles. Discussions and negotiations have to be carried out so the two parties clearly identify their responsibilities and contributions before education begins and trainees are enrolled. Practical details such as the criteria and procedures for enroling trainees have to be clarified. Many questions have to be answered: Why must trainees take the CanTEST at the CCLC in Beijing as the first requisite? What is the CanTEST? How is it different from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the English Proficiency Test (EPT)?

Communication and joint management is a crucial issue which needs to be discussed before the extension centre begins. Counterparts should be designated early so that there is representation from both parties. Unfortunately, the actual process of communication, which needs to be open and frequent especially when the project is in a remote area where, at best, communication is slow and unreliable, was not resolved. It is also essential that both parties keep regular contact so they understand the restraints involved and so that outstanding issues can be resolved.

It is essential to ensure that the CCLC/SWPI will have the status and the authority to function effectively within the host institution. This requires strong support at both the presidential and vice-presidential levels. Usually the extension centre is either established as a separate unit with its own dean or integrated into the Foreign Languages Department (FLD). At SWPI, initially, the centre was under the Foreign Affairs Office (FAO), which was not an appropriate location. In the second year it moved to become a separate department. This separate department status is given to all special projects at SWPI such as the Natural Gas Centre and the Well Completion Centre. However, the CCLC/SWPI is different from the other SWPI projects because it has a full time commitment to language training while the others offer sporadic, short-term training courses run by experts parachuted in for a few weeks.

The host university's contribution to the CCLC/SWPI was to provide staff, facilities, basic office equipment and teacher accommodation[2]. Originally, the centre had only the director and part-time teachers. However, staff positions now include a Chinese director, two full-time teachers, a part-time teacher, an office worker/secretary and a librarian. In addition, the FAO contributes services for the foreign teacher and visitors such as visa and residence permits as required, transportation, and suitable accommodation. Rates for accommodation and transportation need to be negotiated.

The CCLC provides input and coordination. As a new, long-term centre, SWPI required extensive input from the CCLC and necessitated the creation of a position to coordinate the centre and plan future centres. Earlier centres had been coordinated by the Canadian head teacher, and the role of Beijing Normal

University (BNU) in these centres had not been clear. By fall 1990, the Canadian head teacher position had been eliminated, so the CCLC/SWPI was coordinated by the Canadian director and academic advisor. However, coordination and liaison took much time and energy, and put a strain on all the CCLC services. So in 1991 an extension centre advisor was hired.

The CCLCP also provides a Canadian teacher and resource materials. As the hiring process for a Canadian teacher takes at least six months, the planning process takes time. In addition, all CCLC teachers need to be briefed on the extension, especially the Canadian teachers who will be eligible to teach there. The CCLC/SWPI also requires basic teaching resources, and resources on Canada, such as Canadian magazines, for teachers to use.

Issues and Concerns: Lessons Learned

The development of the CCLC/SWPI has not always been smooth and easy going. There have been problems, but many lessons have been learned. The problems have not been the same all the time; the longer the centre ran, the more the root of the surface problems became clear.

Trainees

Since the CCLC/SWPI provides an intensive language training course, a high standard of work and study is required of both teachers and trainees. The teachers devote all their energy to improving trainees' English proficiency. The trainees, of course, study full-time. The central purpose of the language training is to make the trainees feel at home in every possible way in respect to language and culture in order to prepare them for study, life or work in Canada under the OGTTP.

Initially it was expected that as all the trainees come from oil and gas, their backgrounds would be very similar. However, their fields differ considerably from reservoir engineering, geology, and exploration to mathematics and chemistry. The English proficiency of candidates also varies considerably and often those from remote areas such as Gansu or Qinghai have had little opportunity for English training. Therefore, many trainees required a preparatory semester, which CCLC/SWPI now offers once a year in the fall semester. A few trainees required a pre-preparation semester, which can now be provided by the Scientific English Section at SWPI. Without the preparatory class, most trainees would never gain entrance to the CanTEST-level class, which is equivalent to those offered in Beijing, thus losing the chance to go to Canada.

The possibility of offering a mature learners' study group for senior engineers has also been favoured by SWPI. They are the *backbones* of the Natural Gas Centres, but have special difficulties because of their age and past experience. An agreement on a mature learners' study group was reached but, unfortunately, this idea has not been realized owing to the inability to collect all these people together at the same time for language training.

All agree that language training is essential prior to sending people to Canada. But, due to delays in the appointment of the CEA and further delays in beginning the OGTTP, trainees have had to return to their units after studying at the CCLC/SWPI. If the trainees remain in their work units for too long after passing the CanTEST, they are busy with their jobs and their English proficiency drops. This is one of the reasons why the responsible people at the Natural Gas Centres now hesitate to send people to study at the CCLC/SWPI.

So it is important to synchronize training and the sending of trainees to Canada. Presently there are 37 CCLC/SWPI ex-trainees ready to go to Canada for on-the-job placements but because of project delays these early graduates are waiting at their work units. Those located at SWPI have been invited to attend video and speaker nights, English Corner activities and the Canadian Studies class. All have now received a self-study kit which includes *Everyday English: Book 2*, a recent Radio Canada International (RCI)-SMU publication. When the CEA was announced in January, 1992, there was increased enthusiasm for the language training amongst all stakeholders but as there have been further delays, optimism amongst the trainees fluctuates. Some take a *wait-and-see* attitude; however, many face serious life decisions as they try to decide whether to take promotions or other opportunities while they wait. Some are posted to remote oil fields where the chances of keeping their English fluent are very slim. Others are concerned that unless the project speeds up they, as early graduates, will find their CanTEST scores out of date as scores are only valid for two years. It has, therefore, been recommended that a refresher course be provided'.

Testing

SWPI initiated classes in September, 1990, after the memorandum of understanding had been signed. Trainees were grouped into two groups according to their years of English study with 31 trainees in a preparatory group and a higher group. News was then sent to CCLC Beijing to request the promised Canadian teacher. No trainees had taken the CanTEST, so informal testing was done in October by a CCLC team who went to Sichuan with a CCLC midterm test. Trainees were then divided more appropriately into the two classes. Some trainees had scores much lower than the preparatory group in Beijing, but they had already begun class; many of these trainees had difficulty obtaining the exit score in only two semesters.

Procedures for the selection of trainees had not been clearly identified during the OGTTP negotiations, and lines of communication were not clear. As a result inquiries came to the CCLC/SWPI about the criteria for choosing candidates and whether or not testing was required. Early on, testing requirements needed to be clarified with CNPC representatives who, in turn, needed to inform the Natural Gas Fields of the dates. The fields were encouraged to nominate candidates, including a proportion of women candidates, which is required under CIDA's women in development guidelines, to CNPC which registered candidates for testing in Beijing. Once identified, potential test candidates often have long distances to travel. One candidate took six days to travel from Dunhuang in Gansu Province to Nanchong for a remote site test.

The status designation of trainees should also have been clearly identified during the OGTTP negotiations so trainees have the appropriate exit score for their placement in Canada. Up to now, all trainees have been designated as on-the-job. This is problematic as it is the lowest CanTEST score, and trainees who will do work/study placements will need higher scores to study in Canada.

Now, and in the future, all candidates are tested before admission as the first CanTEST acts as a placement test. This allows teachers to assess how many semesters of language training are necessary before the candidate will be ready to go to Canada and to ensure a somewhat homogeneous class group.

Potential trainees for the OGTTP did not come to Beijing for the July 91 CanTEST. As a result, in the fall of 1991, a remote site CanTEST was taken to SWPI and trainees were tested at the extension centre. Trainees who scored between 1.5 and 3.0 were selected for the preparatory semester. All trainees had been classified as on-the-job status which requires an exit average of band 3.5, and trainees' progress was estimated at a band per semester. In addition they were also given a similar testing in January, 1992, to measure their progress. Finally they came to Beijing in July, 1992 for their exit test.

Testing at a remote site is not the same as testing in BNU. In a remote site CanTEST, despite the smaller group, special attention must be paid to security and confidentiality of the material and marks. In China most knowledge is considered public, so staff need direct and clear instructions on keeping marks and information confidential.

There have been serious problems getting trainee transportation for testing in Beijing and accommodation at BNU. Initially, trainees had to arrange their own transport and accommodation, and many came hard seat for 36 hours to Beijing. Trainees wasted much time and energy worrying about getting tickets and, as a result, many did less well than expected. This issue was raised with SWPI, and eventually, after discussions at the vice-presidential level, they agreed to make sleeper reservations. Booking accommodation at BNU is an ongoing problem, so some trainees stay on campus and others stay in nearby hotels and use a study area at the CCLC.

Teachers

The job descriptions for the teachers at the CCLC/SWPI are, in fact, broader than at the CCLC, especially for the one full-time Canadian teacher. In setting up a centre, one key factor for success is the Canadian teacher who is assigned; s/he has to be flexible and quite self-sufficient, familiar with the CanTEST and ready to devote her/himself to the job. This teacher has to have a minimum of one semester of teaching experience at the CCLC, the ability to work respectfully with Chinese colleagues on an equal basis, and to act as a source of Canadian cultural knowledge. A minimum knowledge of Chinese is also very helpful. The teacher is involved on a daily basis with the centre and the trainees and maintains weekly contact with the extension advisor in Beijing. S/he also collaborates weekly with Chinese colleagues to explain methods, answer questions, or discuss general teaching issues.

One of the biggest difficulties facing the CCLC/SWPI is that it has been plagued by constant Canadian and Chinese teacher rotation. This has created innumerable problems. Often, Canadian teachers were reluctant to take such a remote posting, so they changed every half semester. As SWPI is remote and rural, the Canadian teacher must be prepared for some inconveniences in living, transportation and communication. So far, most Canadian teachers coming to SWPI have worked diligently and effectively, but it is important for those who are coming to have a good understanding of the situation in SWPI (See M. Savard, *Beyond the Rice Paddies*).

Chinese teachers have rotated just as often. Initially part-time teachers were assigned from the FAO, as the staff consists mostly of English teachers and the Chinese director was in charge of FAO. Since the fall of 1991, the arrangements have greatly improved as teachers have been assigned from the Scientific English section of the Basic Sciences Department. In 1991, the CCLC required that SWPI provide two full-time teachers as the constant changeover of teaching staff was creating serious concerns about the quality of the program. A two-year rotation was recommended so teachers could fully understand the CCLC approaches and goals. Although two full-time teachers were finally designated in spring, 1992, this has not eliminated the constant rotation and all its related problems.

Teachers are "full-time" in the truest sense of the word. They should devote themselves fully to the activities of the CCLC/SWPI, not only the classroom instruction, but also to extra curricular activities. However, many of the Chinese universities calculate the teachers' workload on the basis of the number of classroom instruction hours given to undergraduate and graduate trainees alone. So correspondingly, the Chinese teachers' bonus and some of the teaching awards, competitions and promotions are given only to those who teach these trainees. Teaching trainees on short-term intensive programmes is not included. Under such circumstances, the full-time teachers at the CCLC/SWPI are penalized financially, which greatly affects their initiative and enthusiasm and their desire to teach at the CCLC/SWPI. The bonus problem has been solved through joint payment, but little progress has been made in trying to solve the other seemingly simple problems.

Curriculum

SWPI decided that the Chinese teachers would teach reading and listening and the Canadian would teach writing and speaking which is consistent with the way classes are generally arranged for their foreign experts. A multi-skills course and extra curricular activities (video night, lecture night, and English corner) were added. Wherever possible, the topics chosen for these activities were to enhance the curriculum content.

At the preparatory level, the new curriculum modules are not used, and teachers develop course outlines based on materials previously used at the CCLC. Additional resources are supplied by the preparation group teachers in Beijing. The range of language levels of trainees produces multi-level classes which put additional stress on the teachers. No systematic review of the preparatory curriculum has yet been done to ensure it meets the needs of the Nanchong situation.

In the spring of 1991, modules from the new curriculum were introduced for the CanTEST-level class. After trying the CCLC time schedule for a semester, the centre returned, by popular demand, to the SWPI time schedule. However, in order to ensure the full allotment of time for each course which is essential with the new curriculum modules, the schedule was adjusted to account for the 50-minute class period. As a result, listening and speaking are now eight SWPI periods and reading and writing are five periods per week. With this arrangement the Multi-skills course was dropped'.

The curriculum has had to become sensitive to the needs of the trainees which are somewhat different to needs at the CCLC. The curriculum incorporates approximately 25% petroleum-related content using specifically designed modules to build the trainees' petroleum-based vocabulary. Many trainees come from SWPI and although they are officially on study leave they are often called in to work. They do not experience the immersion situation of their colleagues in the dormitory, who usually insist on English only rules, as they use Chinese at home. One trainee decided to overcome this disadvantage by moving into the dormitory for half a semester. Special courses and workshops have been set up to meet trainees needs. Because there are few Canadians in Nanchong, in the spring 1992 semester a Canadian Studies course was added by popular demand, and several Canadian studies modules were used from the old Regional Orientation Centres (ROCs) curriculum. It was attended by teachers, trainees and past graduates. Many trainees who come from southwestern China have pronunciation problems and Sichuan is no exception, so a pronunciation workshop, taught by a Chinese teacher with knowledge of typical Sichuan pronunciation difficulties, was set up one hour a week with an additional hour, when needed, for those with very serious difficulties. A listening workshop was also added to accommodate the needs of certain trainees.

As at all CCLC locations, teachers are asked to complete daily logs, module evaluations, and course outlines. In addition, teachers can only leave for urgent matters or approved conferences and must make arrangements to cover their class hours at another time or arrange a replacement teacher.

Teacher Training

From the beginning, teacher training for all assigned teachers has been a priority, but it has not always been systematically addressed. Chinese teachers should have taken the CanTEST during the pre-planning stage. Since 1991, however, both Chinese and Canadian teachers have been introduced to the modules and methodology at the CCLC pre-semester training, where they can meet and share ideas with other teachers, and through on-site workshops.

Many Chinese teachers had little contact with and, consequently, had little understanding of the context-adjusted communicative approach needed for CIDA trainees in an intensive language training situation. Two of the assigned, full-time teachers had both studied abroad and had some understanding of the methods. However, just because they had studied abroad did not mean they could implement a communicative approach. One teacher, when introduced to a jigsaw activity, commented that they did those in class in England, but when asked if he had ever taught it he said, "no, of course not!" Extra curricular activities provide other opportunities for many teachers to cooperate and to learn from each other. However, when CIDA is planning future large projects, training places should be set aside for Chinese language teachers to be sent to Canada for training in the communicative and the context-adjusted communicative approach.

This year, it seems that the CCLC/SWPI is not very well understood by the other English teaching sections at SWPI which are too busy with their own affairs to pay much attention to the CCLC/SWPI. Therefore, a series of joint professional development workshops have begun which assist teachers in examining their methodology and should help to bring the two sections to closer understanding. CCLC staff from Beijing have provided workshops on teaching listening, the CanTEST, the context-adjusted communicative approach, and the teaching of writing and reading. Others are planned. In addition, the Canadian teachers often help the Chinese teachers with recording, editing manuscripts, or difficult language points, and Canadian lectures are often open to the whole campus. Chinese teachers help the Canadians in areas such as traditional teaching and learning styles in China, particular pronunciation problems of trainees, grammar points or cultural mores which make intercultural communication difficult.

Administration

Effective coordination and communication between the CCLC and the CCLC/SWPI, and between the CCLC/SWPI and the other four Natural Gas Centres involved in this project, are crucial. CNPC must play a vital role as liaison body between all of these institutions. At the ministerial level, CNPC should play a greater role in the coordination between the CCLC and the five Natural Gas Centres as these are directly under the administrative leadership of CNPC. The International Exchange Department of CNPC should require that each of the five centres develop a detailed plan for sending trainees to the CCLC/SWPI for language training. The plan should include the total number of potential trainees, predicted testing and enrolment dates for the CCLC/SWPI program, their future exact status in Canada, and so on.

During the first year, responsibility for the CCLC/SWPI lay with the Chinese director and the Canadian director and academic advisor at the CCLC. The Chinese director was responsible for the running of the centre as well as future planning and coordination with the ministry, CNPC. He assigned teachers, held staff meetings and ensured that teaching logs, midterm and end of term reports and evaluation forms were completed.

In 1991, a Canadian extension advisor was assigned to coordinate with the SWPI centre and supervise the professional activities to guarantee that the training of CCLC/SWPI reaches a similar quality as the CCLC in Beijing. Together with the Chinese director the advisor also helps solve administrative problems and plays a crucial role in assuring that the CCLC/SWPI operates well.

The advisor position also involves needs assessment, liaison between the CCLC and SWPI, programme and course planning, advice on teacher selection, arrangement and responsibility for off-site testing, and liaison with work units on pre-CanTEST information. The position also involves training teachers in classroom management (such as the writing of course outlines), selection of materials, interpretation of curriculum modules, classroom observation and feedback. It is based in Beijing and reports to the Canadian director. In hindsight secretarial services should have been assigned to the position.

In the fall of 1991, a Chinese head teacher was appointed to relieve the Chinese director's load as he became the dean of the Basic Sciences Department. The head teacher assists the director with the day-to-day running of the centre and the bimonthly staff meetings held to discuss ongoing issues such as teaching, teacher training, testing, modules, trainee progress and schedules. Communication and joint management is a crucial issue which is constantly discussed. Communication needs to be open and frequent and cross-culturally appropriate so that both parties understand the constraints involved. This is especially essential in a remote location as communication by telephone is difficult and unpredictable. As a result, the Canadian teacher sometimes has to pass on information sent by the advisor, by phone or in the weekly fast mail package, because if a Canadian is not present, all communication breaks down unless initiated from Beijing. Effective communication would help prevent decisions being made by one side or the other without discussion and joint consultation. In future, further steps must be taken to improve this *out of sight, out of mind* attitude towards communication.

It is also difficult to find suitable and acceptable compromises when two sets of policies are involved in the CCLC/SWPI administration. SWPI policy is not always known to the Canadian side, but it is frequently identified as "the way we do things." As a result, CCLC requests are often considered to be inappropriate and are not dealt with quickly or in a way appropriate to CIDA's expectations. For example, requests for the two full-time teachers were delayed until SWPI presidential approval could be obtained. Also, term reports, which are required by CIDA, were not considered a priority by the Chinese side. It was not until the CCLC withheld the Canadian teacher that these outstanding issues were resolved. On the other hand, when SWPI raised concerns about travelling to Beijing for the teachers' orientation and wanted to have it in Nanchong, the CCLC agreed.

On the whole, the CCLC/SWPI and the English language sections have cooperated fairly well. However, they have differing priorities. The English sections support the Extension Centre by providing teachers, language labs and other facilities. However, there are always issues to be resolved such as who has priority for the VCR or the new listening laboratory. In addition, the English sections believe the SWPI administration should consider a way to give them financial compensation for assigning the two full-time teachers to the CCLC/SWPI. There is some resentment as the English sections are short staffed, and allotment of the full-time teachers to the CCLC/SWPI makes them still busier.

Resources

In a remote setting, up-to-date resources are crucial. Early in a project, a resource centre site should be identified, and a librarian assigned. At the CCLC/SWPI a librarian was assigned in the fall of 1991. Up to this point, the teachers had to set up the resource centre in addition to their other duties. It was located in the main CCLC/SWPI office in an effort to ensure access hours. Later the extension advisor arranged for materials to be listed, but the collection was not catalogued until the librarian arrived.

The collection tries not to duplicate materials available in the Institute's main library, so it includes teacher training resources, Canadian materials, ESP in petroleum, and general English readings. Magazine subscriptions, videos, basic teacher training texts, reading materials and listening tapes were ordered, and copies from the CCLC self access were arranged. Resources are divided into trainee and teacher collections. Almost all items are available for loan because it is essential that the resource materials at CCLC/SWPI are available at all times for the use of teachers and trainees.

Some early decisions about resources later proved to be inappropriate. Resource material from Canada was sent directly to Sichuan, and a box of materials was delayed in customs in Chengdu for almost a year while negotiations were held to extricate it. As a result, since 1991 all materials have come via Beijing which causes additional complications such as postal shipments as well as Nanchong visitors being requested to carry small packages.

Presently the collection is almost complete. A review of resource materials, with input from the teachers, is now underway so gaps can be identified and additional resources can be ordered. A list of core materials required for establishing an extension centre is now being compiled for future use.

Conclusion

Planning and implementing an extension centre is a slow and time consuming process which brings both learning and frustration. Once the initial bilateral contract has been signed, the project implementation requires careful pre-planning. Direct support at the presidential or vice-presidential level, an extension advisor and a Chinese director in a senior position, such as dean of the languages section, is essential at the beginning. There also needs to be clear and regular communication between the two institutions involved and continuity in the staff, in administration and especially in teaching.

It is possible that after the first two to three years an extension project can achieve sustainability without the extension adviser, and after three to four years without direct Canadian support as long as support is slowly and carefully reduced. However, the time line will vary considerably according to the location and the difficulties encountered in the project; qualified, experienced foreign expert involvement will always be necessary to keep standards and motivation high.

At the CCLC/SWPI, both Canadian and Chinese sides have agreed on the main issues of the CCLC/SWPI, such as the responsibilities and size of the centre, teachers' duties and the requirement for trainees. However, good will and a willingness to understand the constraints and concerns of the other side are essential for a productive relationship.

Great progress has been made at the CCLC/SWPI. Looking back over the years, most of the early recommendations have been implemented and things now run much more smoothly and successfully. It is hoped that with the inception of the OGTTP and despite the withdrawal of the Canadians at the CCLC in Beijing, an intensive language training centre at SWPI can continue to exist and fulfill its mandate to provide language training to oil and gas trainees in the future.

Endnotes

1. There are five units involved in the OGTTP: Research Institute of Petroleum Exploration and Development in Lanfang, Hebei; Research Institute of Natural Gas Technology in Luzhou, Sichuan; Yumen Research Institute of Petroleum Exploitation and Development, Gansu; the Gasikule Development Centre, Qinghai and the SWPI.

2. The following basic office equipment is essential: basic office supplies, a photocopier, an overhead projector, a computer/typewriter, a tape recorder, a VCR*, a language lab*, a slide projector* and a fax machine*. Items marked * can usually be used at the host university.

3. The total number of trainees from the OGTTP who are ready to go to Canada is listed below:

Test Date	Internals	Externals	Total
July '90	0	2	2
Jan '91	10 pass	2 pass	12
July '91	4 pass (ICCLC) 2 recomm. 6 sugg.	3 pass	15
Jan. '92	1 pass	2 pass 1 recomm.	4
July '92	13 pass 1 recomm.	3 pass	17
TOTAL	37	13	50

4. The teaching periods per week are arranged as follows:
   Speaking = 8 periods = Canadian teacher
   Writing = 5 = Canadian
   Reading = 5 = Chinese
   Listening = 8 = Chinese
   Pronunciation = 1 = Chinese
   Conferencing* = bimonthly = Canadian and Chinese
   English Corner = 2 = Canadian and Chinese
   Speaker night = 2 biweekly = invited speaker
   Video = 2 = Chinese

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Beyond the Rice Paddies
The Nanchong Extension Centre

Michelle Savard

The first time I taught at the Southwest Petroleum Institute (SWPI) in Nanchong was in December, 1990. I had been in China for only six weeks. As the first Canadian teacher returned to Beijing mid-semester, a teacher was needed for the last five weeks of the term. In order to have this unique teaching experience in a remote part of China, I volunteered to replace her.

Nanchong is located in the heart of Sichuan Province. It takes thirty-five hours to get there from Beijing (thirty-two hours by train and three by bus) or if the town is not fog-bound, a small 727 will fly you in. It is a very isolated little town with a population of under 200,000, twelve of whom are foreign teachers working for various universities and colleges. The CCLC/SWPI Extension Centre (CCLC/SWPI) which began in October of 1990 is located on the campus of SWPI.

The resources available at the centre in 1990 were initially extremely limited. There were under ten books in each skill area, eight videos, some magazines and newspapers, some reference books on Canada, and self access packages which the first Canadian teacher had put together.

Less than a year later, in September, 1991, I had the opportunity to return to Nanchong to teach for a full term. The resources, standard of teaching and the organization of the CCLC/SWPI had improved ten-fold. There is a very good selection of library materials now available to the trainees with numerous packages for self-access; an extension advisor was hired to support the program and to deal with administrative matters. Finally, inroads had been made to coordinate the four skill areas to make a more cohesive program.

The first set of trainees I taught in 1990 were at the CanTEST equivalent level, but those I taught in 1991 were beginners in the preparatory group, which means they would study for two semesters at the CCLC/SWPI. Both groups were also quite satisfied with the training and the resources available and did not appear to feel that they were at a disadvantage studying in Nanchong as opposed to Beijing. Both classes, one without access to a large range of resources and one with a number of materials available to them, made remarkable progress. This may be because the trainees in Nanchong have more contact hours with the teachers and much more individualized training than those in Beijing.

Since Nanchong is such a distance from the main centre in Beijing and since there is only one Canadian teacher on the spot with knowledge of the CanTEST and Canadian culture, much more responsibility falls on that teacher than on those in Beijing. The Canadian teacher works with her Chinese colleagues to identify skills needed to pass the CanTEST, to select videos that are relevant and have pedagogical value, to help locate lecturers in this town of twelve foreigners so the trainees can have access to other native speakers, to assist Chinese colleagues when they need advice, and to jointly organize recreational activities to give trainees further opportunity to practice their English. The quality of teaching and activities organized are equivalent to or better than the centre in Beijing.

In Nanchong teaching is not just a nine-to-five job; it becomes an integral part of the teacher's life. With this investment of time and energy, all the Canadian teachers in Nanchong have been found to personally take the trainees' struggle for success as their own.

This paper presents an overview of the training offered in Nanchong and the professional and personal hurdles encountered while implementing the program in this remote area.

Teaching

As in the preparatory class at the CCLC in Beijing, trainees have oral, listening, reading, writing, multi-skills and extra curricular activities which include a video night, a lecture night and English Corner. The video is jointly previewed by a Chinese and the Canadian every week before it is shown to the trainees. An outline and pre-questions for the trainees are prepared in advance. Since feature films are far too difficult for the preparatory class trainees, the series *On Track* is used and was received very well by the trainees. This teaching video consists of humourous five-to-ten minute sequences followed by a number of communicative exercises. After the six units of *On Track* are finished, short features are shown.

Lecture night is scheduled bi-monthly but is dependent on who is in town. In the fall of 1991, the Nanchong foreign population consisted of ten Americans, one British and one Canadian. These teachers were very busy and reluctant to take on another hour of work and very reluctant to speak on a topic which they would need to prepare. Although few of the topics were directly related to Canadian culture or the curriculum, the lectures offered the trainees a chance to hear another native speaker, to learn about other cultures, and to practice formulating questions.

In addition, trainees participate in English Corner and a Multi-skills course. Many trainees said that the English Corner was their favourite two-hours of the week because it gave everyone an equal chance to discuss and to think about some interesting issues. Most exercises used in English Corner involved moral dilemmas where trainees, in small groups, had to share their opinions and come to a consensus. At the beginning of class the exercise and the difficult vocabulary would be explained. Trainees would get into groups and discuss the topic while the two teachers circulated. The Multi-skills course was a holistic course incorporating the four skills within a Canadian cultural milieu.

Teacher Training

As in Beijing, part of the mandate of the CCLC is to provide teacher training and professional development to all teachers. Until September, 1991, the Chinese teachers working at the CCLC/SWPI also had to work full-time for the Foreign Affairs Office (FAO) at SWPI. In the fall of 1991, a full-time teacher was assigned but the other teachers were full-time teachers in the English section of the Basic Sciences Department who taught part-time for CCLC/SWPI. They taught two hours more than the normal teaching requirement and, consequently, it was very difficult for the Chinese teachers to find the time to meet to discuss methods, materials or to observe classes. The reading teacher, the Multi-skills teacher and I met every Friday afternoon for an hour to discuss the content, materials and methods of the course and if the need arose, we discussed problems the trainees were having. We exchanged ideas on what was working, what was not, and the skill areas where the trainees needed more practice.

The reading teacher focused on and developed a number of skimming and scanning exercises. He also worked with the trainees on reading strategies and reading comprehension. Because of the professionally homogenous nature of the class, approximately twenty percent of his course was devoted to ESP materials on the oil and gas industry. The Multi-skills teacher was assigned late and did not have the opportunity to take part in the summer orientation program in Beijing, so he was not familiar with the rationale of the CCLC. Therefore, although he was briefed on the goals and content of the course by the advisor, he initially taught Multi-skills as a grammar course. However, half way through the term, he began to focus on the areas where trainees had the most difficulties such as pronunciation. He used a structural approach with *Take Part* for the Canadian content and added some Chinese intensive reading exercises. The multi-skills course has now been dropped in favour of a Canadian Studies course with the focus on cultural content.

Professional and Personal Hurdles

There are many challenges that inevitably arise as a result of being the only on-the-spot Canadian at the CCLC/SWPI. These challenges can be identified as professional and cultural. The professional problems included trying to impart the high expectations of the CCLC and trying to meet the trainees' needs.

At SWPI, the English teachers are very familiar with and are capable of teaching intensive and extensive reading as well as listening. However, the larger percentage of trainees in the English sections at SWPI learn English knowing that they will probably only use it for reading and view the subject as just a mental exercise. When the CCLC/SWPI began in Nanchong, its expectations were very different. The CCLC expected the teachers to prepare trainees for life and work in Canada and also to pass the CanTEST. In a word, in a short fourteen-to-sixteen-week term, trainees are expected to make great progress.

As I mentioned, the Chinese teachers had very little time to meet in order to coordinate the four skill areas. However, in the fall of 1991, the thematic outline used in the preparatory class in Beijing was given to all teachers as a guide at the beginning of the term. We all tried to follow it, but sometimes adjustments had to be made because of a lack of resources in one area or another. Consequently, we were able to achieve at least a loose coordination of skills.

The trainees in Nanchong have high expectations of the Canadian teacher, and they also have a lot of needs. Unlike Beijing with its staff of Canadian teachers and veteran Chinese teachers, in Nanchong the Canadian teacher is the only native speaker and the sole resource on Canadian culture and the CanTEST.

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There were questions like, could you tell me which Canadian universities have courses in oil refinery? How many people read the newspaper every day in Canada? What's the most an engineer can make in Canada if he specializes in well completion techniques? There is no group of Canadian colleagues among which to brainstorm for answers. Therefore, the Canadian teacher must be prepared to find information.

The Canadian teacher in Nanchong can not help but be confronted with a whole host of cultural differences. For example, in 1991, it was decided that the centre would move to a newly completed building. The old centre was split between the second and ninth floors of the Well Completion Building, and it moved to the fifth and sixth floors of the new Well Completion Building. We heard about this move at the beginning of the term but no date was fixed. When we walked into the office on the first day of the term, we were informed that today was the day we were moving. This meant packing and unpacking the whole office just as classes were getting underway.

The new classroom did not have a blackboard, so the blackboard measurer came in and measured the height of the board to suit my height. The director told me that during the second week of classes, my afternoon writing class had to be cancelled in order to allow time for the blackboard to be installed. Consequently, the trainees would miss two hours of writing class. This was my fault. I had asked for a blackboard, but I had not specified what time I would like it to be installed. I negotiated with the director, and another time was found.

This constant need for negotiation was an integral part of life in Nanchong. For example, the last class scheduled in the morning ended daily at noon. After being in the new building for less than a week, I went back down to the office after morning class to work for another thirty minutes. When I left the office at 12:30 and returned to the lobby, I found myself locked in. The doorman had gone for lunch. I later learned that if he did not leave by noon, he would not get any food as the cafeteria had set hours. In the evenings when we had English Corner, the trainees had to negotiate a time for the doorman to let us in and out.

Getting sleeper tickets so trainees could arrive in Beijing to sit for the CanTEST in good health also required negotiation. During the first 1990 semester, trainees started to leave Nanchong one to two weeks before the end of the term to secure train tickets. In order that trainees would not miss so much class time, SWPI finally agreed to arrange the tickets for future trainees. I found that an understanding and acceptance of these and other cultural differences was vital in order to keep the program running smoothly and to live with stability in this remote part of China.

Basic Problems

Some basic problems that arose were with communication, getting supplies, and getting machines repaired. In order to make a phone call out of Nanchong, I had to ask someone in the FAO to place the call for me. I did not have the language skills to pick up the phone myself, and there are no direct outside lines in the apartments. If FAO obtained a line to Beijing, it was often scratchy and interrupted by other callers or the operator. The extension advisor and I called each other once a week and the advisor sent a package every week by fast mail. I would pass on my requests and messages, as well as those from my colleagues, to the extension advisor and would be given instructions and messages for myself and the Chinese teachers.

On a monthly basis, I would make requests for supplies and specific material. Although the resources were quite good in Nanchong, there are still holes to be filled. In 1990, the CCLC staff in Beijing did their best to fill these holes and to send the material requested. If it got from the post office to the FAO, to the director's office and finally to the CCLC/SWPI office, it took at least three weeks. In fact, one box of videos for the CCLC/SWPI which was sent from Canada was stuck in customs for almost a year. Also, our subscriptions to various Canadian newspapers and publications often take months to find our centre in Nanchong. By 1991, the weekly fast mail packages reached the teacher in four days!

Most of the machines I depended on in Nanchong either broke down or blew up while I was there. In the second week of November, 1991, my Canon computer ribbon printed its last page and the computer screen at work blew a fuse; also the photocopier, my phone and my refrigerator broke down. This would be an extraordinary coincidence in any country. However in a remote area, these inconveniences put your life at a standstill if the town does not have the personnel or the parts to fix the machines. The phone and the refrigerator could be fixed locally. However, all other broken parts had to be imported from either Chengdu, the closest major city, or Canada. This meant that for two weeks, I had to learn how to be flexible. I could not print any new material or administrative related paperwork for the program as my small disks were not compatible with those used on the office computer. Since communicating with Beijing was essential, my weekly call to Beijing was put through to the lobby of the guest house. Over a scratchy line while the doormen and chambermaids were gathered around the television, I conveyed the latest program developments and needs. The photocopying could be done in another building after the centre negotiated a price. However, photocopying on one of six machines for hundreds of teachers was a time consuming ordeal. Situations like these demanded that I become more patient and understand the limits of what could be done and how quickly it could be accomplished. I could not phone and get a photocopy repairman to come that afternoon. There is only one in town; he lives quite a distance and he does not have a phone. There was no computer parts store nor Canon distributor in Nanchong. So I had to wait.

Finally, the personal obstacles I had to overcome were feeling overwhelmed because of my foreignness, feeling isolated, and feeling my independence was threatened. It became clear to me very early on that I had a choice how to perceive these challenges: negative and troublesome or as an opportunity to increase my understanding of the Chinese and to strengthen my capacity both professionally and personally.

Beijing for at least the last 5 years has been inundated with foreign teachers. We are no longer the rare birds we used to be. In Nanchong, however, many people have never seen a foreigner before. Consequently, foreigners are observed like exotic birds. For instance, every Saturday I would go to the market and buy vegetables. If I stood anywhere for more than a few minutes, a crowd of no less than fifteen would gather to see what I was buying and how much I paid for it. This took some getting used to.

As I mentioned, Nanchong is very isolated. It has no train, and it is at least a six-hour drive to the closest major city. In the winter months when I was there, it was often too foggy to travel at all. Also, because of sporadic plane and bus schedules, it is very difficult to get away for a weekend since there is no guarantee that you can get back for Monday classes.

Any teacher who goes to Nanchong or any other remote posting must be self-reliant. The foreigners who live in Nanchong read a lot, some write academic papers, take Chinese lessons, learn *Taiji*, *Wushu* or Chinese cooking, others have a lot of Chinese friends and do their best to keep occupied. Once a week the foreigners meet socially and also exchange materials and ideas.

In China, the group comes first, whereas for some Canadians individual needs are paramount. As a Canadian, I had the greatest difficulty in this area. Without Chinese, I could not make a phone call. I could not buy my own train ticket. I could not get goods from the guest house without the help of the FAO. Since the FAO is responsible for the foreigners, they want to protect us as much as possible. Culturally, this is difficult to understand at times, and we often had long conversations in order to reach an understanding.

To conclude, teaching in the CCLC/SWPI was the most memorable five months of my stay in China and definitely the most rewarding teaching experience that I have ever had. This experience gave me the chance to focus on only twelve trainees as opposed to thirty or forty in Beijing. It gave me a chance to develop myself as a teacher and made me realize that teaching ESL must encompass all other disciplines. Teaching in the CCLC/SWPI demanded that I stretch my capacity and learn how to be truly flexible in order to encompass all that daily life in Nanchong demands. It is not a good place to be for the close-minded or the timid, but it is the perfect place to be if you want to grow.

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Michelle Savard has always been intrigued by cultural differences. After studying psychology and education, she lived and worked overseas and wrote short stories and articles in order to record those aspects of cultural diversity which fascinated her. The article in this journal represents a few observations she made while living and working in central China. Her most memorable experience at the CCLC was the spontaneous water fight which occurred at Taoronting Park in June 1991 between over 100 students and the teachers.

Exploring New Frontiers:
The Communicative Approach in a Chinese Context

Deng Hai, Guo Yangsheng, Colleen Kenyon, Xiao Yong

A teacher rarely has the opportunity to see how students use what is taught to them in the classroom. More often than not, curriculum content and teaching methodologies are decided upon and implemented, and teachers do their jobs in good faith, hoping that they are imparting to students the skills and knowledge most vitally important. As years pass, students either apply what they have learned, or discard it as irrelevant mental baggage. Few of them look back over their shoulders long enough to give a nod or a shake of their heads, to let their teachers know if anything was really accomplished in the classroom.

At the Canada/China Language Centres in Beijing (CCLC) and Nanchong (CCLC/SWPI), students often demonstrate skepticism about the short-term practicality of the program while they are enrolled in it. The CCLC trainees are all adults. They have a clear idea why they study English, what they want to learn and what goals they wish to achieve. If they do not care about their long-term goal, at least they know their short-term aim is to pass the CanTEST and go to Canada to study or to work. They see the close connection between English study and their personal benefits and futures. The effectiveness of the program is tested, in the students' eyes, by their results on the CanTEST. However, the teachers focus more on preparing the students to function in personal and professional situations in Canada. It is the results of this practical test of language acquisition that are often not seen.

Recently, the Canadian colleague had the good fortune to encounter some of the CCLC trainees who have now arrived in Ottawa. It was with great interest that she listened to their high praise of the communicative approach and Canadian content used in the classrooms at two centres. These same students, whom we had often heard criticize the materials while they were in China, were now most grateful for the fact that they were prepared for life in Canada, and able to feel somewhat informed about important aspects of the new society existing around them. As teachers, it was gratifying to realize that the type of language and cultural training offered, and often forced upon students, did indeed stand the test of real-life challenges. Yet, we were left to wonder how students can be convinced of the value of this learning before the fact, when they are still a world and a long train ride away in Nanchong.

Whatever problems arise in Beijing, trying to lead students to slip into a Canadian frame of reference is intensified in the relatively remote setting of Nanchong. In both cases, the task of mastering English is something that has been imposed upon students; in the case of Nanchong, it is an expectation that is not altogether reasonable. Unlike Beijing, where there are now many icons of the West existing as examples of what the students will be going to, Nanchong does not bear the vaguest cultural resemblance to anything Canadian. Furthermore, the presence of thousands of foreigners in Beijing is reduced to a circle of no more than twelve in Nanchong, and venues for practising English exist only in the form of university English courses and English Corner. It

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is no wonder that students attending the CCLC/SWPI often raise their eyebrows at the content they are taught, or at the way that it is presented to them. Brainstorming and jigsawing have no more relation to their educational experiences than credit cards do to their finances or hamburgers do to their taste buds. One could argue that the experiential distance separating the students' native environment and that which they must face in Canada makes it all the more necessary to offer them a curriculum full of information about Canada, and one which will familiarize them with Canadian approaches to education. Nevertheless, the large gap existing between the students' prior knowledge, and that presented in the curriculum poses many problems, and runs the risk of sabotaging the goals of the program if it is not dealt with effectively.

It is an educational truism that one must always teach a new concept upon the foundation of a concept already familiar to the student. A concern was expressed that this is an irresistible force that meets an immovable object in the form of the CCLC's commitment to the communicative approach. Even though many students have great difficulty forsaking rote learning strategies; even though they are often much more comfortable with traditional Chinese methodology; and even though some may actively dislike compulsory classroom discussion, role playing, and jigsaws, *inter alia*, the communicative approach is judged to be prior to this and any other recalcitrant educational principle, on the not unreasonable assumption that it reflects many such powerful principles itself. The burden is upon the student to adapt, making the leap from rote learning to an approach requiring not simply a new educational outlook, but also the refinement or development from scratch of certain personality traits (assertiveness, confidence, social skills) essential to the proper performance of classroom learning strategies.

One solution to this tension is to treat the communicative approach as complementary to traditional Chinese methodology, rather than antithetical to it. The former encourages students to look for correct ways of expressing themselves in English by forcing them to find *quick and dirty* strategies for real-life communicating. The latter can help settle the consequent problem of deciding which ostensibly successful utterances are the *correct* ones - hopefully exposing .(some of) the fundamental regularities defining the competent use of English and enabling the student to achieve a leap ("Aha!") revealing the *short cuts* to formulation of proper sentences. Indeed, this *is* the communicative approach as properly construed. The CCLC has been and should continue to be careful not to define its choice of methodology strictly as distinct from the rote learning of grammatical rules. Considering the comfort most students feel with the latter approach, it is probably better to err by dwelling on the consolidation stage than by underemphasizing the rule-based structure of English (and, of course, Chinese too; this common ground provides the opportunity to exploit the above-mentioned educational principle of building upon existing foundations). Great attention has to be paid both to the improvement of the students' language skills and to the rectification of their habitual mistakes resulting from their Chinese way of thinking, or, to be more exact, from the habits of their mother tongue which, for example, has no plural forms of nouns, no articles, no formal changes of tenses, no gerunds, no infinitives - *no nothing* concerning the changes of word or grammatical forms. The communicative approach serves to get the students off the starting block, but unless the many unfamiliar aspects of English grammar are brought to the students' attention and reinforced through means of structure-based consolidation exercises, the students will soon be off and running in the wrong direction.

The CCLC/SWPI teachers themselves are required to adjust their personal methodologies and ideas about content in order to adhere to the centre's curriculum. While there is some room for variations and digressions in the teaching of the modules, students are quick to sense when the teacher is unconvinced of the value of what they have been asked to teach, or the effectiveness of how they have been asked to present it. In order for students to feel confident with the communicative approach, and to take in the large doses of knowledge that are imparted to them through this method, it is essential that the teacher act as a strong advocate for the curriculum, and that he/she reflect a thorough understanding of how to manage a student-centred language class. Intensive orientation sessions and regular professional development workshops are offered to CCLC/SWPI teachers at the Beijing CCLC and at SWPI for this purpose. Chinese colleagues, previously unfamiliar with operating an interactive classroom, begin to experiment with new strategies while Canadian colleagues attempt to develop greater sensitivity to the expectations that Chinese students will carry with them into their studies at the CCLC.

In Beijing, the CCLC teaching staff is large enough that it is possible for Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing teachers to work in skill teams, offering one another support in the development and revision of curriculum, and allowing opportunities for observation and team teaching in the classroom. In this way, those educators previously unfamiliar with the communicative approach are able to see how it is implemented by others. They then are able to improve their own lesson designs and to approach the task of teaching communicatively with the confidence required to make the methodology effective. In contrast, teachers in Nanchong have noted that with only one teacher in each skill area, there is rarely an opportunity to observe the teaching performance of a colleague in the same course, and a less than optimal exchange of ideas and opinions specific to their individual skill areas. Their professional development is hindered by this lack of interaction as they often have to diagnose and solve the problems that they encounter in teaching the curriculum without the benefit of the insights or expertise of others. The practice of teaching behind closed doors has, for good reason, become antiquated within the teaching profession. Nevertheless, CCLC/SWPI teachers often find themselves teaching in isolation despite the fact that they have left their doors ajar.

The Chinese colleagues who work within the Nanchong setting benefit greatly from any teacher training that they can access. As they find the methods at the CCLC to be almost contradictory to how they have previously operated in the classroom, and as many of them have to learn much of the Canadian content of their course in the process of teaching it, it is important that a support system be available to help reinforce what they implement, and that they be able to make visible improvements as facilitators in a communicative teaching environment. Unfortunately, torn between the responsibilities assigned to them at the CCLC, and those which they still carry as teachers and researchers within their institute's regular Basic Subjects Department, the time and energy of these teachers gradually is exhausted. They soon become frustrated with the adjustments required of them in this new approach to teaching, and most do not reap the benefits of teaching for two semesters.

With all of the hard work required of Chinese colleagues assigned to the CCLC/SWPI, it is understandable that when their teaching performance is not fully recognized by the authorities of their institute, when they find themselves robbed of opportunities to be evaluated, to be chosen as model teachers, and to receive much valued professional awards and promotions, they become eager to turn the challenges of working at the centre over to the next group of inductees. The unfortunate result is a lack of continuity in the Nanchong CCLC teaching staff. Nevertheless, the teachers and administrators who have been involved with the Nanchong Extension in its two years of operation have managed to secure at least a foothold for this approach not only within the Centre, but within the English Section of the Basic Subjects Department as well. It could even be argued that the turnover in teachers, while perhaps negatively affecting the continuity of the CCLC program, has aided the transmission of a modern approach to language training beyond the centre's walls.

The most effective means of doing something is not always the easiest. This is certainly true of language training. The teachers and students involved in the intensive language programs offered at the CCLC/SWPI have shared in the challenge of taking a unique approach to teaching and learning English in China. Frustrations have been encountered by educators and learners alike, and at times faith in the relatively unfamiliar communicative approach has wavered. Still, when all is said and done, the students find themselves with reliable English skills, and teachers experience the thrill that comes from seeing students interact dynamically in the target language within and beyond the classroom. Through this approach, teachers successfully communicate language and culture to trainees who are then equipped to go forth and communicate with others in English. Some of the skills and knowledge learned at the CCLC may well prove irrelevant; still, there is little question that much of what students are exposed to within this language learning environment will remain a faithful companion to them in their future interactions in the English language.

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Xiao Yong taught speaking and listening at the CCLC/SWPI on several occasions. A graduate from the CCLC Beijing, he completed a year of interpreter training at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, Canada. Presently he is working as a petroleum interpreter in Haikou, Guangdong.

Guo Yangsheng taught multi-skills and teaches pronunciation part-time at the CCLC/SWPI. He is an active writer and researcher who teaches in the FLD at SWPI.

Language and Cultural Training at the CCLC:
Some Unrecognized Contributions

Rick Miner

Over its ten years of existence, the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) and its predecessor, The Canada/China Language Training Centre (CCLTC), have played an important role in the achievement of Canada's official development assistance (ODA) goals and the enhancement of Sino-Canadian relationships. Unfortunately, the exact nature and scope of these contributions have been largely underestimated. This misunderstanding has arisen, in part, because the centre developed a reputation for language training excellence. This achievement has greatly overshadowed the equally important contributions it has made in the area of improving cultural awareness and sensitivity. This paper discusses the role of the CCLC in this process and its relationship to Canada's ODA objectives.

Canada's ODA Goals

The official principles of Canada's ODA Charter were established in 1987 (*Sharing our Future*, 1987, p. 23) and recently accepted by the SECOR Report (*Groupe SECOR*, 1991). They stress the alleviation of poverty, helping people help themselves, the primacy of development priorities and a focus on partnership arrangements. Such goals clearly have a humanitarian focus. However, the ODA Charter also recognizes that the operationalization of such goals has to be tempered by broader geo-political and economic considerations. As stated, "The methods for achieving this goal (ODA Charter) are varied and complex, guided first by humanitarian concerns but also by interests which are political, economic and commercial" (*Sharing our Future*, 1987, p. 23). The recognition that Canada's aid decisions are influenced by factors other than purely humanitarian considerations is neither surprising nor unique. This situation is prevalent in most, if not all, other donor agencies.

While over-simplifying an obviously complex situation, the contention here is that CIDA really has three operational objectives. These involve the extent to which an activity:

a) satisfies CIDA's development intents,
b) complements and/or is supportive of the government's diplomatic aims, and
c) contributes to Canada's economic and commercial interests.

Operational Decisions

As stated in the ODA Charter, development objectives take primacy and this is certainly true over the long run. However, for any particular project/program it is equally clear that one of the other considerations may greatly sway the design, level of funding and implementation strategy employed. Even projects that are purely developmental in their focus and scope are not immune from an economic and/or political analysis. Thus, one can see that aid decisions are not based solely on recipient partner needs but must also consider broader Canadian interests and objectives.

Such a position is not meant to imply that such decisions cannot be complementary. For example, largely developmental programs may have significant commercial components which are very supportive of the developmental principles of ODA. Likewise, programs that emphasize trade or commerce may have significant developmental benefits. In other words, aid should not be viewed as an either/or decision with respect to CIDA's three operational objectives. In most cases a blend of interests is involved.

It must also be recognized that specific developmental priorities span the three operational objectives. For example, the ODA Charter specifically identifies the increased participation of women as one of its six developmental priorities. It does not take a huge leap in logic to realize that such an objective is complementary to a diplomatic aim that emphasizes human rights. Likewise, an economic/trade objective of increasing the access of Canadian firms to international markets seems to be compatible with the developmental priorities of assisting in structural adjustment or increasing energy availability and food security.

Thus, given the multiple operational objectives and the extent to which specific priorities can span operational areas, it is clear that the development of aid projects and the subsequent analysis of aid success is far more complex than is often recognized. It should also be apparent that while developmental objectives take priority, diplomatic and economic/trade objectives are also critical factors in the decision making and analytical process.

The Canada/China Language Centre

In 1982, CIDA began funding an innovative program in China aimed at providing language (English and French) and cultural training for Chinese professionals coming to Canada under CIDA sponsorship. The initial training facility was established at the University of International Business and Economics (UIBE) in Beijing and the first students were enrolled in March, 1983. This operation was subsequently moved to Beijing Normal University (BNU) in April, 1987 and called the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC). In addition to the CCLC, extension centres have also been established and operated in four other Chinese locations. Over ten years of operation, these arrangements have provided language training to more than two thousand trainees from all parts of China.

As originally envisioned, the CCLC was to provide language and testing services for all CIDA programs in China. Yet, it soon became clear that the potential for the centre was far greater than solely that of a language training service. Specifically, it was obvious that training could and should be done within a cultural context. Thus, when developing materials the Centre tried to use, as extensively as possible, Canadian materials that would not only satisfy the pedagogical needs of the language learners but also convey information about Canada, its values and cultural diversity.

By the late '80s one could look at the CCLC curriculum and find a variety of topics integrated into the language learning process. Some simply provided information (geography, climate, ethnic diversity, government structure, etc.) but others (the environment, gender equality, legal system, etc.) provided more in-depth consideration of Canada and its cultural values. Such a value orientation was made possible by the presence of Canadian teachers and Chinese teachers who had extensive Canadian experience (six months or more).

As well, upon arrival in Canada, trainees spent up to four weeks in a cultural training program at one of the Regional Orientation Centres (ROCs). There the programs emphasized the need to understand the Chinese and Canadian cultural differences as an essential means of improving the cross-cultural communication process. Thus, the CCLC, with the ROCs, developed a broader role of presenting Canada and Canadian culture to trainees prior to arriving at their placement in Canada.

It is here where the contributions of the CCLC and its relationships to the developmental, diplomatic and economic objectives of Canada's ODA policy have been consistently underestimated. This lack of awareness arises, in part, due to the general acceptance of one prevailing human resource development (HRD) model which places less importance on diplomatic and economic objectives.

HRD Model

As can be seen (Figure 1) this HRD approach assumes that developmental progress can best be achieved by the transfer and application of new skills and knowledge. Here, language and cultural training (L&CT), as provided by the CCLC and the ROC system, are seen simply as a service which lays the necessary linguistic and cultural foundations required for a trainee to take full advantage of the technical training which forms the core component of this model.

Figure 1
Prevailing HRD Model

Language training → Cultural training → Technical training → Knowledge application → Change

As a language service, it is very clear that the CCLC has been exceptionally effective. External evaluations (Evaluation Research Group, 1992; Evaluation Research Group, 1991; J. Dionne, E. Cray, D. Huot, W. Xiang and J. Cairns, 1988) have consistently commented on the high quality of training provided and the fact that the CCLC and ROC *graduates* have more successful in-Canada training programs and encounter fewer difficulties than those Chinese professionals/trainees who have not received CCLC/ROC training. Thus, it is clear that the service-related objectives of this program have been easily achieved and, in most cases, greatly exceeded. For example, the Management Plan (1991) for the current phase of the program specified the objective of providing language training to 400 individuals. Although all the numbers are not in, it appears that the CCLC and its extension centre will have trained over 700 individuals during this period - a significant accomplishment by any standard. One would be remiss in not also mentioning that this level of support was provided well below the approved budget.

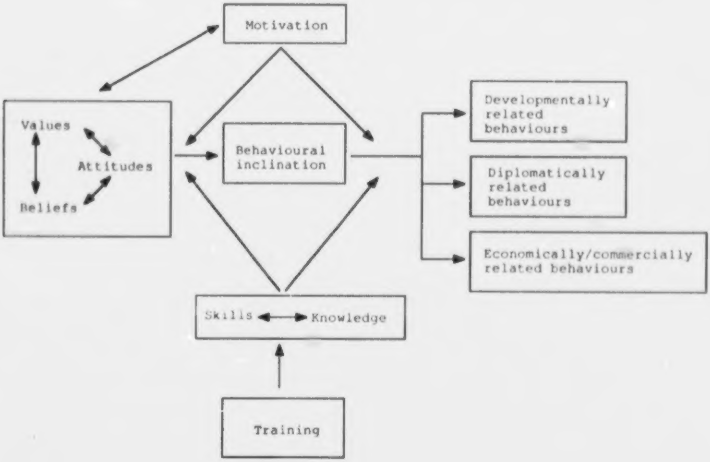
Now the question becomes, "Has the CCLC only been a linguistic service in support of these objectives or has it provided other contributions?" To answer this question one must come back to the operational objectives of Canada's ODA policies and understand the relationship between these objectives, behavioural change and attitude development.

A Behavioural View

Figure 2 illustrates a model showing the proposed relationship between attitudes, behaviour and CIDA's ODA objectives. This is admittedly a very complex relationship and no model can adequately encompass all the intricacies involved. Yet, prevailing attitude and behaviour research (H. Tosi, J. Rizzo and S. Carroll, 1990, p. 190-197) shows that the basic elements and relationships proposed are generally accepted.

The model postulates that an individual's attitudes, values and beliefs are interrelated and become the origin of a behaviour inclination. When this predisposition toward a behaviour is combined with an individual's motives and skills/knowledge, a behaviour inclination emerges. Yet, prior to behaving, an individual will again consider the consequences of such a behaviour (a reconsideration of the motivational intents) and his/her ability to carry through with the action being considered (a knowledge/skill analysis). Obviously, this general process relates to a multitude of behavioural options but here only those behaviours that relate to CIDA's developmental, diplomatic and economic/commercial objectives are being considered.

Figure 2
Behavioural model: General

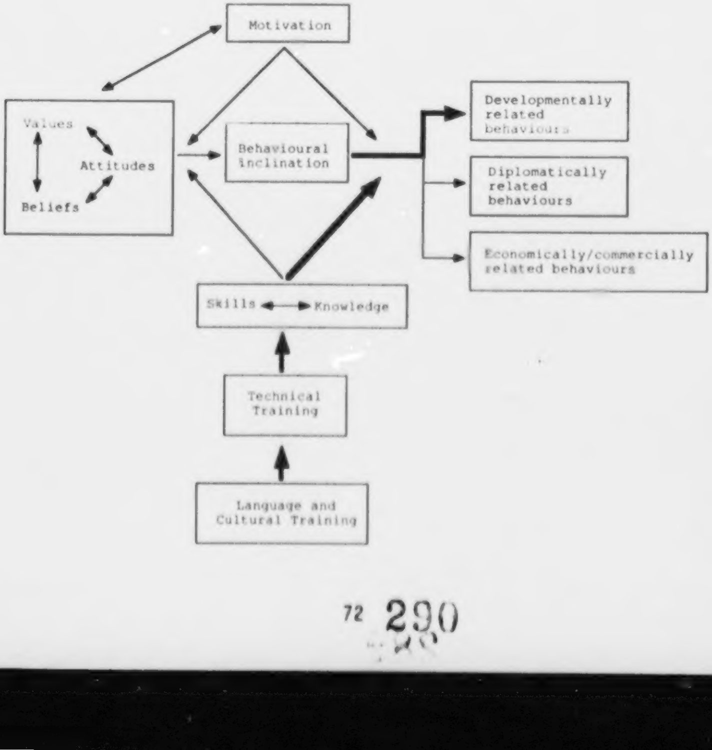

Motivation
Values
Attitudes
Beliefs
Behavioural inclination
Developmentally related behaviours
Diplomatically related behaviours
Economically/commercially related behaviours
Skills
Knowledge
Training

As stated earlier, the exact nature of the three objectives of interest are not independent and can vary over time. However, for the purposes of this analysis, desired developmental behaviours will be ones that complement the developmental priorities stipulated in *Sharing our Future*. Diplomatic objectives are those that correspond to Canada's general foreign policy and include a diverse array of aims which are generally tied to Canada's way of seeing the world and which are typically grounded in a basic Canadian value system. Issues such as human rights, democratic principles, gender equality and a host of other value-laden positions would be illustrative of the types of foreign policy considerations.

Economic/commercial objectives relate to Canada's interests in developing its own economic future and using aid as a mechanism for not only helping itself but ideally doing so through the mutual benefit of helping others. Thus, providing Canadian services or products in support of development assistance as a means of establishing and enhancing future trading relationships would be illustrative of this objective.

Using bold lines, Figure 3 shows the prevailing view of the L&CT contributions to CIDA's development objectives. Here, L&CT is simply seen as another necessary skill that is required prior to the technical training. This training then provides skills and knowledge which influence a behavioural inclination and the subsequent behaviour associated with the project's developmental objective.

Figure 3
Behavioural Model: HRD/Development Focus

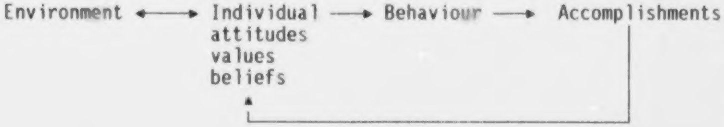

Motivation
Values
Attitudes
Beliefs
Behavioural inclination
Developmentally related behaviours
Diplomatically related behaviours
Economically/commercially related behaviours
Skills
Knowledge
Technical Training
Language and Cultural Training

This particular view of HRD and the role of L&CT is generally accepted and, when managed and organized well, can lead to desired behaviour changes which complement the specified development objectives. So, this particular approach describes one causal relationship that has developmental merit.

The underestimation of the impact of L&CT occurs because of the limited appreciation of the critical role played by attitudes in any behavioural model. As research shows, (Maier, 1973) attitudes are the most significant factors influencing behavioural decisions. Thus, the frame of reference one develops toward a person, object, country or issue becomes critical in understanding, predicting and influencing one's behaviour. In essence, behavioural change must first involve an attitudinal change. Attitudes, in turn, are based on and/or grounded in values and beliefs.

The way the beliefs, attitudes and values are created is very complex and involves considerations such as family influence, peer groups and various formal and informal educational experiences. As one can see in Figure 4 the whole process of attitude development is extremely dynamic. People interact with their environment, and evoke or observe certain behaviours which result in various accomplishments (outcomes). These events (accomplishments) feed back to the individual as part of the learning process which reinforces the desirability and/or suitability of the individual's beliefs, values and attitudes.

FIGURE 4
Behavioural Overview



One can now use the behavioural model (Figure 2) to help understand the CCLC's other contributions to CIDA's ODA objectives. To start with, it must be recognized that the typical trainee enters the CCLC with an already established set of values, attitudes and beliefs. While some may be strongly held, few are specifically tied to Canada since the vast majority of trainees have little or no direct Canadian experience/knowledge. However, they do have generalized views of the west, many of which are associated with Canada.

Research shows that the rate and degree of attitude change will be most directly affected by a) the source of the information, b) the importance of the message, c) the medium, and d) receiver characteristics. The first three of these factors have the most relevance to the CCLC process since the trainees (receiver characteristics) are very heterogeneous.

The research in each area of interest is quite extensive and touches on numerous individual and situational elements. Yet, some tentative, although admittedly not comprehensive, conclusions can be drawn. With regard to source influences, it is generally accepted that the more the source is liked and seen as an expert, the more his/her views will be considered. Likewise, the more direct the communication medium (face-to-face discussions vs. written material) the more likely that change will occur. Finally, the more the message is seen to conform to an individual's needs, the more likely it will be received and understood.

If one considers the structure and procedures at the CCLC, one can see that this environment is very well-suited for the conveyance, understanding and possible acceptance of Canadian values and culturally-related materials. For example, in a typical year there would be, along with at least six Chinese with Canadian experience, ten Canadian teachers and administrators. Past program evaluations consistently showed that the trainees both liked these individuals and respected their expertise. Thus, this appears to be a situation involving high source credibility.

The CCLC also offers an intensive language program where there is a high degree of interpersonal interaction spanning a long period of time (typically 18 weeks). This would seem to indicate that the medium (personal contact) is also positively associated with change and the exposure period is long enough to affect such a change.

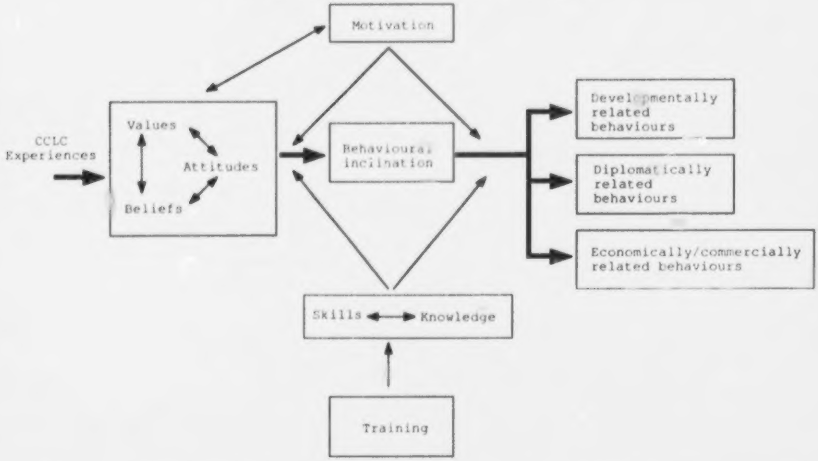
Finally, the trainees see their teachers as experts, and desperately want to improve their linguistic abilities since this is directly (instrumentally) related to their selection for a Canadian placement. Thus, an understanding of the messages (information) provided is perceived as being critical to the candidates' ultimate success. The messages, therefore, take on a high level of importance, given the source credibility, message importance and personal medium. It can be seen that the CCLC environment is very conducive to an increased understanding of Canadian values which influences both the belief and attitude systems.

Aside from the teachers, Canadian content is used extensively as part of the pedagogical approach. These materials include an information, cultural and value content. It is, therefore, contended that candidates leaving the CCLC have a far greater understanding of Canadian culture and values than those not attending. It is further contended that this knowledge has positively influenced the trainees' perception of Canada and Canadians. While admittedly pseudo measures, one can look at the CCLC end-of-semester surveys, ROC surveys and various debriefings, and consistently find that the CCLC teachers are uniformly praised for their help and assistance.

Thus, through the use of Canadian materials, Canadian teachers and Chinese teachers with Canadian knowledge, it is contended that a very positive impression of Canada has been created. Looking now at Figure 5 one can see that these positive attitudes are likely to directly relate to CIDA's ODA objectives. Specifically, one can begin explaining this process by recognizing that attitudes are far more instrumentally related to other behaviours than anything else one can currently measure. Thus, once a positive attitude or understanding has been developed, it becomes the essential element in subsequent behaviour.

A look at the economic and commercial ODA objective provides further illustration. In order for longer mutually-beneficial trade to evolve, there need to be preconditions. Some of these are purely economic (cost analysis) and some demand-related (is there a need?). However, a critical factor is the level of trust and understanding that exists between the potential partners. It is the contention here that while need may be paramount, partner trust and understanding is a very close second, and considerably ahead of the purely economic considerations. The history of international trade is littered with very good deals that never saw the light of day because of partner misunderstandings. Likewise, one can find instances of deals that did not seem to be economically viable, but due to the ability of the partners to work together to solve their mutual problems, turned out to be very beneficial in the long run.

Figure 5
Behavioural Model: CCLC Related


Motivation
CCLC Experiences
Values
Attitudes
Beliefs
Behavioural inclination
Developmentally related behaviours
Diplomatically related behaviours
Economically/commercially related behaviours
Skills
Knowledge
Training

Similar illustrations can be provided for broader geo-political (diplomatic) considerations. While it is admittedly less frequent that drastic changes occur, it is contended that an understanding of difference, even if the views are not accepted, becomes the basis for accommodation if not agreement.

Conclusion

A description of the CCLC's role as simply a language training facility grossly underestimates its contributions to Canadian/Chinese relationships in the areas of development assistance, trade and diplomacy. The CCLC has been the initial point of Canadian contact for over 2,000 Chinese professionals coming to Canada. It has been instrumental in the development of views about Canada that have significantly improved the trainees' ability to understand and function effectively in a foreign environment. It is further contended and substantiated that this experience has yielded positive views about Canada and Canadians, and has led to positive predispositions (attitudes) toward Canada. The increased cultural awareness about Canadians has reduced the level of misunderstandings that would have otherwise emerged. Finally, it is hypothesized that these changes have and will continue to play a significant role in not only achieving CIDA's developmental objectives, but in making direct and meaningful contributions to their diplomatic and trade initiatives as well.

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The *Lao Won* Syndrome: Cross-Cultural (In)Effectiveness

Ann Curry

As the Canadian director of the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) since August 1990, I have been concerned with the effectiveness of the project in achieving its goals in the areas of language testing and training, teacher training, extension centres, institution building, and consultancy. As well, there is the ultimate goal of project sustainability: having the CCLC managed and operated by Chinese staff and faculty without Canadian involvement. According to Dan Kealey (1990), Canadians working abroad are effective in achieving project goals when there is a combination of professional expertise, personal adaptation to the new culture, and the establishment of good personal relationships with people from the host culture (as reported by those from the host culture). This led me to wonder how we Canadians were doing on the "effectiveness scale", so to speak, and I sought the advice of my colleague and counterpart, Professor Chen Daxing.

The approach we decided on was to develop a series of general questions related to working with foreigners and/or on foreign projects which would allow our Chinese colleagues to give their opinions without having to evaluate individual foreigners. Approximately 20 people from the Foreign Affairs Office (FAO), Foreign Languages Department (FLD) and the CCLC, as well as from the CCLC extension centre in Sichuan Province, agreed to participate. The understanding was that a Chinese view of effectiveness would be portrayed which might be of value both to Chinese and foreigners working together in China.

The questions asked as a guide to discussion were:

1. Have you been abroad? Describe the length and purpose of your stay abroad and location.
2. How long have you been studying your foreign language?
3. Do you think there are any advantages or disadvantages to having foreign projects or to working with foreigners?
4. Could you list some things about China that foreigners do not understand?
5. Could you list some things you do not understand about foreigners?
6. What things should foreigners learn *before* they come to China that will make them successful in their jobs in China?
7. What things should foreigners try to learn or do once they are in China?
8. What would you tell the responsible Chinese person who is going to start working with foreigners?
9. Could you list some things you do to deal with difficult foreigners?
10. Could you list some things you have done which have helped foreigners improve their working style in China?
11. What do you tell the people you supervise about working with foreigners?

Most of the respondents had been abroad (e.g. Britain, USA, Canada, Russia, Japan) for varying amounts of time to attend conferences, undertake study tours or official missions, or to study. They reported little difficulty in communication in their second languages and are all currently working with foreigners in some capacity. Since the respondents either participated in wide-ranging group discussions or handed in written answers to the questions, it seems more appropriate at this time to offer their comments and analyses under various themes rather than question by question.

I have characterized one of the areas of discussion as pride in China. While it is not at all surprising that people are proud of their country, this pride is a factor in relations with foreigners. Our Chinese colleagues and friends want to explain their country to foreign guests, to show the accomplishments and the achievements, and to try to make foreigners understand what, exactly, China is. In fact, for our colleagues in FAO, publicizing China is part of their job so that when foreign guests return home they will be able to dispel some of the ignorance about China that the Chinese feel exists abroad. This is not to say the Chinese are not realists, that they don't understand that China is a developing country and, therefore, has certain problems. Obviously, the Chinese understand the reality of China better than any foreigner because they live it. What is not appreciated by our Chinese colleagues are complaints and criticisms about a reality that needs, instead, to be accepted.

Chinese colleagues caution foreign guests that complaining can hinder friendships. Foreigners need to be patient, to try to understand the circumstances ("after all, how can you criticize if you don't understand"), and not to jump to conclusions. Problems usually work themselves out in time, perhaps not in the way the foreigners expect, but usually in a manner that is considered a compromise. There is also the feeling expressed by certain colleagues that since foreigners in China generally live in better circumstances than many Chinese, the foreigners needn't complain at all. Furthermore, when Chinese go abroad, they still often find themselves at the bottom of the heap. Finally, the Chinese respondents said that they certainly didn't mean that foreign guests need to agree with things Chinese or to *become* Chinese; rather, foreigners should simply accept the reality of China and, with the help of Chinese friends, come to understand why the reality exists.

The Chinese are most certainly realists about China, and their hope is that foreigners will understand before they come that they will be living in a developing country. There may be problems with hot water, electricity, communications, and institutional food services (i.e. university cafeterias). Problems may need more time to be worked out, and compromise solutions may need to be accepted. Again, Chinese colleagues indicated a need for foreign guests to be patient and tolerant, but at the same time stated that Chinese themselves could not always use the fact that China is a developing country as an excuse for not doing things, and that the Chinese must be responsible for explaining to foreigners what can and cannot be done.

China as a developing country is another factor which can affect personal relationships between Chinese and foreign guests. The Chinese consider themselves to be normally quite friendly, and they are aware that since foreigners are far from home and often don't speak the language or know the customs, they, the Chinese, should try to help, to socialize, and to make friends as is customary for good hosts. There remains, however, some embarrassment over inviting foreigners to small, crowded flats where spouses and children often do not speak the foreign language. Once relationships have been established, this embarrassment fades because the Chinese feel comfortable that the foreigner understands and accepts the conditions and is interested in deepening the social relationship.

Certainly, Chinese colleagues feel that some knowledge of Chinese history and culture is necessary before foreigners arrive in China, simply because this knowledge will make it easier to accept the reality of China and to form good personal relationships. As well, this base of knowledge allows foreigners to understand the Chinese pride in their country and their hope that foreigners will help explain China to the world at large. For our Chinese colleagues, the danger for foreigners without this basic knowledge is the assumption that "things Western" are universal. One example given was the foreign teacher who asked his students to write on "murder", not a topic of general discussion or knowledge in China, and the students were not able to do the assignment without copying foreign works. Other examples of ignorance include foreign teachers who didn't understand Chinese students and their learning styles very well so that the teaching results were not very good. Some had no knowledge of research currently being undertaken in China or of Chinese eating/food habits or gift giving protocol. Still others assumed that Chinese "have nothing". The general feeling seems to be that some knowledge is necessary before Chinese and foreigners can even begin to interact.

From the need to understand Chinese pride, history, culture, and reality, we come to the need for foreigners to understand what is referred to either as "administrative matters" or "how things are done". As one colleague put it, "Foreigners think it's easy to make a decision, whereas in China, it is very difficult because we must first listen to the opinions of common cadres/members, after that report to superiors and then wait for final decisions". Changes come slowly in China, and, often, our colleagues do not have the power to make the changes unless they are given a nod as approval, especially for the changes with grave responsibility or based on a cardinal principle. Our colleagues do, however, understand our frustrations which is why they counsel patience and tolerance, and point to the progress which has been made. As another colleague stated, "Chinese bureaucratic procedures may not be right, but they are a fact and need to be accepted".

Several colleagues mentioned *guanxi*, the personal contact system, as an example of how things are done in China which foreigners find difficult to understand. The fact that *guanxi* is personal and pervasive makes it hard for foreigners to deal with. By personal it is meant that only that particular person has access to and can depend on his/her network, and to keep up the network, things must always be done on a personal basis (e.g. lunches, gifts). For foreigners, the pervasiveness of *guanxi* - everywhere, at all levels, and for every Chinese - is a problem because "how things are done" is often a matter of *guanxi* rather than policy or procedure. Of course, if one goes too far and does something against the state law, she/he would also be punished by law. In Canada, we have our own form of *guanxi* (e.g. *pull*, the old boys' network), so that understanding *guanxi* in China becomes more a matter of degree than fact.

By far, the area discussed at most length and in the greatest detail was the one I have named personal relationships and mutual respect. A lot of words were used, many adjectives, sophisticated language and concepts, all leading me to believe that there was a lot of emotion tied up here. It was considered very important for foreigners to make friends with Chinese colleagues and others as, then, the foreigners would have someone to tell them how a Chinese thinks and feels and to explain the reality of China. These friendships help to reduce the amount of stereotyping that goes on between cultural groups and allows the *friends* to see each other as individuals, with similarities and differences. As one colleague put it, "We have come to realize that not all foreigners are interested in luxury hotels, but would prefer to see the reality of China, to know the conditions in rural areas". And as another pointed out, "Some foreigners think all we do is go to temples during the day and sleep at night!" Thus, good personal relationships allow for mutual understanding and harmony.

Practically every participant mentioned mutual respect as the basis for good personal relationships. One colleague stated, "Foreigners need to respect Chinese people. Chinese are normally very friendly, but if they sense arrogance, it makes them unhappy." Another said, "Some foreigners feel we Chinese should respect them, but not the other way around!" And another, "You might be a big fish at home, but not necessarily here! Chinese should not be treated like servants no matter who you are and how important you are." Obviously, snobbery and arrogance will destroy relationships. It is necessary to learn to "communicate with a sense of equality".

While the importance of knowing Chinese culture, values, and philosophy has already been mentioned as well as the need for good personal relationships to promote mutual understanding, the language itself which is used to discuss these points or to form the relationships can cause problems. Some words are so culturally-loaded that they interfere with the correct interpretation of behaviour. What words really mean in a specific cultural context needs to be discussed when people are, theoretically, using the same language. Some examples given by our colleagues are the words aggressive, modest, selfish, individualism, and privacy.

The points made above illustrate what our Chinese colleagues feel will produce effectiveness in China. Generally, they feel that the advantages of working on a foreign project or with foreigners are enormous. Administrators are interested in the working styles of foreigners (e.g. taking minutes in meetings); teachers feel their language proficiency and teaching methodology improve; actual products result from projects which save the Chinese a lot of time and often provide an impetus for further development; and exposure to new and/or different ideas is welcome. The downside can be increased pressure at work ("Counterparts have to do all things, big and little... like a secretary, and make major decisions, too."); feeling in a subordinate position; trying to smooth over situations when a foreigner becomes upset, and feeling guilty because foreigners' expectations may be too high or unrealistic given Chinese circumstances. As well, expectations of foreigners or foreign projects may simply not be understood.

Ever the gracious hosts, my colleagues managed to refrain from mentioning that a Canadian could be ineffective. I would like to believe that, but after listening to my colleagues and re-reading what I just wrote, I simply can't manage that particular leap of faith. I will conclude by relating a particular story, and I ask the forgiveness of my colleagues if they would have preferred this story just to remain among us.

It seems there was a certain foreigner who just wouldn't listen. "If you told him to go down the corridor to the right, he would go left!" He also had no respect for China or its people. "He thought we were such idiots, he had to teach us how to eat bread!" This foreigner always thought he was right. "We soon realized this man spoke only nonsense, so instead of calling him *Laoshi* (teacher), we called him *Lao Non*!"

This story appears to support what Dan Kealey found in his study: that effectiveness, finally, is determined by the members of the host culture, not by the foreigners. It is to be hoped that after ten years of operation in China, the CCLC and the Canadians who have worked here would be judged effective by our Chinese colleagues, but only they can tell us.

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Ann Curry, Canadian director of the CCLC, was a teacher for 15 years, both in Canada and abroad (France, Ghana, China), working in areas such as ESL/FSL and the public school, community college, and university systems in Saskatchewan. In 1984, she began working in project management, first with Saskatchewan Education and later with the CCLCP in Canada and China.

Trainees in Canada

Heidi Taylor

What happens in Canada to the Chinese professionals who study English and French at the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC)? Does their second-language training prepare them for living and learning in Canada? This article tells the stories of three such people - fictional characters, to be sure, but with experiences common to many real CCLC graduates.

Zhou, Bai, and Wang met at the CCLC. In spite of their differing professional backgrounds, they found that they had a lot in common. Each had left family and work responsibilities to live in Beijing, study English full time, and face the challenge of the CanTEST. Each was highly motivated to do well, and excited by the opportunities that a placement in Canada would offer.

Bai, a deputy director of a forestry research station in Gansu Province, was beginning his second semester at the CCLC when Zhou and Wang arrived. He was one of the first people to be chosen for training in Quebec City on a new long-term forestry project, and was very much aware of the heavy responsibility he carried as a result. At the age of 50, adjusting to life as a *trainee* in Beijing was difficult at first. However, he had made good progress in the first semester, and had renewed confidence that he would indeed be able to acquire the communication skills needed to live and work in Canada.

In contrast, Wang's proposed nursing training in Winnipeg was part of a university linkage project which had been going on for some time. She had already talked at length with two colleagues who had completed their training in Canada and with the Canadian project director who had visited Tianjin several times. She knew that she would face a mountain of reading in her placement, and conversations with the visiting Canadian had shown her that she needed to work hard on her listening comprehension as well.

Zhou was a university lecturer in economics from Shanghai and had travelled outside China for a short time once before, to a university in Africa. He didn't know his destination in Canada yet; that would be decided by the program which granted him a training award, after language-training was completed. Zhou was hoping to learn more about the functioning of a stock exchange and to get some experience using computers.

Zhou, Bai, and Wang worked long hours all semester. They saw each other often in the language lab, the library, and in the dining hall. They waited anxiously together for the oral interviews which ended the CanTEST and wished one another *good luck*.

So, imagine Zhou's pleasure six months later when he met his two classmates in the Beijing airport. All three were headed for Canada, along with a number of other Chinese professionals. Some had studied at the CCLC, at different times, and others had studied English elsewhere in China. Their first stop in Canada was for a four-week cultural training program at one of the three regional orientation centres (ROCs) which, along with the CCLC, make up the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program.

The first few days passed in a whirl. Bai hadn't spoken English since returning to Gansu at the end of the semester, and found it difficult to understand what Canadians were saying to him. *Was all that work at the CCLC for nothing? Maybe I'm just too old to learn new things.*

Zhou was on top of the world - full of curiosity and enthusiasm for hands-on experience in a different economic system. He now knew that he would be spending a year in Halifax, on a practical attachment in an investment company. A strange thing had happened on the second day: not able to sleep from the jet lag, Zhou had been out walking when a passerby stopped him and asked for directions to the university library. *Didn't he know from my face that I am Chinese? Why would he ask me? I don't look like a Canadian, do I?*

Both of Wang's suitcases got lost, and it took several telephone calls to the airline before they were returned to her. Wang compared herself to another member of the group, a doctor who had not attended the CCLC, and felt much better prepared to deal with Canadians. The ROC staff talked about "culture shock" and the cultural differences regarding health care between Canada and China. *This information may be useful for Dr. Li, but I won't have any trouble living here. I got back my suitcases, didn't I? I know how to talk to Canadians.*

The four weeks at the ROC were full of new experiences. Wang visited a teaching hospital and had lunch with a group of nursing students. Bai's *ear* for English came back quickly, and in a simulation game one afternoon he played the chief negotiator for a multinational forestry company. On the opposing side was Zhou, playing an environmental activist .

As the ROC program ended, and bags were packed for the flights to each person's final destination, Zhou's thoughts were focused on his first day in the Halifax firm. He wanted to know more about the firm and his supervisor in particular, to see how his professional interests, and the needs of his university back home, could be met. Wang climbed onto the plane for Winnipeg feeling confident and well-prepared to begin nursing studies.

As for Bai, he headed for Quebec City vowing to make the most of his relatively short five-month stay. While there Bai began to understand the structure of the host company, how decisions were made, how meetings were conducted. He had not expected to spend so much time in an urban office, and it took time to recognize who was who in the organization. Luckily, a Canadian co-worker gave him some valuable hints: "Look for a guy with a tie *and* a hard hat. He's the boss."

Bai's age and experience may well have helped in his ability to function in a new environment. He had made a big adjustment in leaving a senior position back home to lead the life of a trainee in Beijing. The interplay of French and English in the Quebec firm was not much different from multilingual situations he had known in China. He left Canada having forged personal links with the Canadian firm, links which have been key in ongoing project management. As well, Bai has been able to advise and mentor technicians and other project participants as they prepare themselves for study in Canada.

The investment company which hosted Zhou had no experience of working in Asia, and his first challenge was to explain his scholarly and professional background in terms that they would understand. Zhou's general language skills were good, but the two sides came to realize that they often had very different meanings for basic economic concepts. It took some time to work out realistic learning objectives for Zhou's year in Halifax, and regular meetings to assess progress and set goals. In this process both sides learned new skills in communicating across cultures.

As Zhou prepared to return to Shanghai at the end of the year, he had learned a good deal, but he had also identified a number of areas about which he would like to learn more. He had computer experience as he had hoped, and looked forward to developing a new course for his university.

Wang is beginning her third year in Canada now, and has made a lot of adjustments both in interpersonal relations and in her approach to the academic work. These adjustments took time, however, and they haven't always been easy. About three months after arriving in Winnipeg Wang became depressed and homesick, and found it hard to concentrate on her studies. *I don't feel well. It's too cold to go to that class this morning. How can I even think of staying here for three years?*

Luckily, Wang had friends who supported her through this difficult time. Other Chinese trainees in the city phoned regularly, and three other nursing students asked her to join a study group. Staff at the ROC where she had stayed on arrival in Canada had been keeping in touch by phone and mail, and they were able to remind her that her feelings were a normal reaction to the *shock* of living in a different culture.

Part of that shock had been due to the differences in academic life between Canada and China. Although reading classes at the CCLC had emphasized skimming and scanning, Wang's previous academic experience had emphasized intensive reading and memorization of texts. When faced with a mountain of reading in her introductory courses, she still felt obliged to understand every word, and became discouraged at the amount of new vocabulary in the readings.

Ironically, in this final year of her program Wang should start to prepare herself for what might be called *reverse* culture shock, or *re-entry* shock. Having become accustomed to working and living in Canada she will have to make some of the same kinds of adjustments when she returns to Tianjin.

Chinese professionals arriving in Canada for training bring technical expertise and second-language proficiency to the task of adapting to new personal and professional environments. A period of cultural training at one of the ROCs provides opportunities to explore and to become self-sufficient, to re-activate language skills which may have become rusty, and to acquire additional tools for cross-cultural communication. As well, through their "outreach" service, the ROCs provide support across Canada, helping Chinese who are studying and training on CIDA-sponsored programs to realize their professional objectives.

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Nonverbal Behaviour:
A Facilitator in Cross-Cultural Communication

Gao Xiuqin

Communication between people involves not only verbal but also nonverbal language. Usually, our nonverbal behaviour betrays us; it tells us how other messages are to be interpreted. It indicates whether verbal messages are true, joking, serious, threatening, and so on. Based on his research, psychologist Albert Mehrabian has devised a formula to measure communication: total impact of a message = 7 percent verbal + 38 percent vocal + 55 percent facial. That is to say, more than 90 percent of the social content of a message is transmitted by nonverbal behaviour (Hall, 1959). Thus, in addition to daily spoken language, a host of silent messages continually occur. These messages make up a nonverbal code which is used and responded to by all people. To be skilful, competent cross-cultural communicators, people need to be more aware of nonverbal cues which consist of all the nonverbal behaviours such as gestures, facial expressions, silence and time management.

Morain (1978) describes nonverbal behaviour as an elaborate and secret code that is written nowhere, known by none and understood by all. Unfortunately, for cross-cultural communication, the "all" refers only to members of the same culture. Though the knowledge of the foreign tongue is indispensable in the interaction with members from a different culture, being able to read and speak another language does not guarantee that proper understanding will take place. Those who have *learned* a language without including the nonverbal component are seriously handicapped if they intend to interact with living members of the culture instead of only with printed materials. Thus, there is a critical need for trainees at the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) who will work or study with members from different cultures to be sensitive to the nonverbal aspects of human interaction. In order to really understand, they must be able to hear the silent message and read the invisible words of different cultures.

As culture can influence various aspects of nonverbal behaviour, it tends to determine the specific nonverbal behaviours that represent or symbolize specific thoughts, feelings, or states of the communication. Thus, what might be a sign of greeting in one culture could very well be an obscene gesture in another. Or what might be a symbol of affirmation in one culture could be meaningless or even signify negation in another. This is because every communicator is a product of his/her culture which is one of the most continuing, powerful, and invisible shapers of behaviour. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the differences in nonverbal behaviour between two cultures and to study the *silent language*. The lack of comprehension of nonverbal signs and symbols is a definite communication barrier, and the understanding of the different gestures is critical to sensitive communication.

A foreign teacher at the CCLC once complained that some students seldom looked at the teachers during the oral interview test. She said that students either looked up at the ceiling or somewhere else instead of looking at her. It seemed to her that the students neither understood what she was talking about nor showed any interest in what she was asking. Therefore, she gave low marks to those students. This is a case of cultural misunderstanding. In some cultures, looking at someone's eyes instead of looking elsewhere while talking to a person indicates respect or courtesy, while in others looking somewhere else could mean not paying enough attention to the conversation being conducted. In traditional Chinese culture, looking at someone's eyes may mean a sign of impoliteness or something personal if the conversation is between different sexes.

The trainees should be aware that when North Americans put their feet up on the furniture it is a sign that they want to relax; this gesture may be interpreted by the Chinese as *disgusting*, or showing *disrespect* to others present. North Americans tend to use the feet-on-the-furniture gesture to signal "I am relaxed and at home here," or "See how casual and folksy I am," and some people like to do it no matter where they are. Therefore, it is not surprising that many trainees studying abroad are shocked to see their teachers sit on the teacher's desk, or put their feet on the desk or chair in class. While Chinese tend to regard it as impolite, the teachers, by doing so, just want to show that they are comfortable with their students in order to make the class more relaxed.

Also some trainees are surprised to see teachers and students touch each other frequently, and occasionally teachers greet students with a hug in the classroom. As Chinese are taught to control feelings from an early age, and are not encouraged to have much body contact or to show emotions, even between intimates and family members, they feel embarrassed when they see people, teachers and students, or even wives and husbands hug and kiss in public. As a result, Chinese are known to be *thermos bottles* - cold outside, but warm inside.

As different cultures have different interpretations for silence, it is a basic social requirement for a new-comer to a foreign culture to know when and where to keep silent. As Ishii and Bruneau (1988) state "different norms of appropriate communicative behaviour exist, and a variety of intercultural misunderstandings can occur if one does not know when, where, and how to remain silent" (p.313). In most North American cultures, silence is viewed as dark, negative, and full of nothing. North Americans may interpret silence as all kinds of messages that may be described as cold, oppressive, defiant, disapproving and humble. Thus speech has a positive connotation, and its function is to avoid silence as well as to fill silences during the transference of messages. Some Chinese students have had the experience of sitting in a classroom where students from North America tend to fill flashes of silence with action and asking questions and forcing others to talk. Unfortunately, this behaviour in class is usually misunderstood by Asian students as pushy and noisy. Comparatively speaking, Asian students are less dominant, less inclined to talk and maintain conversations, less apt to speak at length or fluently. The Chinese have been brought up in an environment in which silence is frequently used and valued. Confucius said "The wise man desires to be slow to speak but quick to act"; Lao Tsu stated "To talk little is natural". Other Chinese proverbs also support this viewpoint: "Out of the mouth comes all evil", and "He who knows does not talk; he who talks does not know".

Time differences, like other components of culture, exist between diverse cultures, and these differences affect communication. To some extent, North Americans like to handle time much like material - they can earn it, spend it, save it, and waste it. People from Asian countries treat it less rigidly; they are less clock-bound and more flexible. For North Americans, a *long time* can be almost anything, it can be ten or twenty years, two or three months, a few weeks, even a couple of days. Some Asians feel that it is perfectly realistic to think of a *long time* in terms of hundreds of years (Hall, 1959). Promptness in business is also valued highly in North America. If people are not prompt, it is often taken either as an insult or as an indication of irresponsibility. Therefore, if one is five minutes late, one must apologize; if he is ten minutes late, he has to give good reasons for being late. In cross-cultural interactions, North Americans will feel surprised to see a Chinese guest who was invited to dinner arrive early - not two or three minutes early, but fifteen minutes or more. Usually at social activities Canadians expect a kind of *professional lateness* while Chinese may view arriving earlier as a demonstration of deep respect, of great gratitude for the host.

In cross-cultural communication, Chinese should keep in mind that instead of visiting foreign friends in the same way as visiting family members and good friends (at any time without previous arrangement), one should become aware that North Americans usually make fixed plans in advance. Some foreigners working or studying in China may find it difficult to fully adopt the traditional Chinese habit of showing up for a visit without any prior notice. It may be hard for them to accept the unannounced visit of Chinese friends. People from different cultures will probably extract whatever fits into their personal world of acknowledgment and then interpret it through the frame of reference of their own culture.

It is really difficult for us to make generalizations about a cultural style of nonverbal behaviours, but it is necessary to realize there are some common characteristics of this silent language. To a degree, nonverbal behaviour is transferable; in fact, some gestures have been *learned* through imitation. However, silent language cannot be taught in the same way that verbal language is taught. Also some non-verbal behaviours have been transferred from one culture to another, or accepted by people all over the world. The hand gestures for *OK* and *victory* or *peace* used to simply mean *zero*, or *2* for the Chinese, but now they have the same meaning as in North America.

To a great extent, nonverbal behaviour is beyond our consciousness. In the process of interaction, one does not just listen to the words; one derives meaning, consciously or unconsciously, from nonverbal behaviours which reinforce the words people are saying with their mouth. One never thinks about what posture, what gesture, or what interpersonal distance is appropriate to the situation. The unspoken codes come out so automatically that people in a culture may not be conscious that they communicate a definite feeling or attitude. Generally nonverbal behaviours are performed so automatically, at such an unconscious level, that those performing them are unaware of their own actions. Therefore, in order to become a competent cross-cultural communicator, one must become sensitive to nonverbal behaviours that regulate social interactions. Insights into nonverbal behaviours as they affect communication not only increase sensitivity to other people, but inevitably deepen one's understanding of one's own cultural system. Some nonverbal behaviours are not teachable, since all humans smile, laugh, cry, sit, stand, or walk in more or less the same way. Children imitate and learn these nonverbal movements and often use them to accompany or replace words; they are not taught nonverbal communication in school. Because one seldom examines how nonverbal messages are sent and interpreted, it is more difficult to note correctly a substantial portion of the unconscious nonverbal communication. It is an extremely important aspect of communication, however, for many important decisions are made on the basis of nonverbal cues.

Like verbal language, nonverbal communication cannot be completely separated from culture. Whether one emphasizes differences or similarities, the *silent language* is much louder than it first appears. Through the study and understanding of nonverbal behaviours and the analysis of the culture that determines the differences in nonverbal codes in cross-cultural communication, CCLC trainees can reduce or nearly eliminate these difficulties in human interaction.

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Typical Cross-Cultural Problems Encountered by Chinese Trainees

Wang Yanhua

Introduction

Increased contact between Chinese and Canadians in academic, economic, and social areas has led to greater interpersonal cross-cultural communication. As these two cultures are different in so many ways, much of this contact has not been that successful. In this paper I will identify the major problems a group of Chinese trainees from the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) encountered; these observations are based on data collected at a debriefing session held in the CIDA-sponsored orientation centre in Vancouver. In addition, I also have conducted interviews with people working with Chinese trainees. Hopefully, through the analysis of those typical intercultural communication problems found between Chinese trainees and Canadian professionals, I can help Chinese trainees better adapt to their Canadian placements.

Barriers Caused By Cultural Differences

The major problems encountered by Chinese trainees fall into the following categories: sociolinguistic inappropriateness, stereotyping or over-generalization, conflict of different value systems, and inadequateness of language proficiency.

Sociolinguistic Inappropriateness

In his article *From Communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy*, Canale (1983), mentions four kinds of competence in communication. One of them is sociolinguistic competence. It addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and appropriately understood in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as the status of participants, the purpose of the interaction, and the norms or conventions of interaction. Utterances of appropriateness refers to both the appropriateness of meaning and the appropriateness of form (Canale, 1983, p. 7). The majority of Chinese trainees from the CCLC have the ability to communicate linguistically, but they still lack knowledge of the values of Canadian society. Their errors can be attributed to their inadequate knowledge in areas such as naming and family. In Canada "a person's full name is written and spoken with the given name first and family name second. In China the reverse is true: family name, then given name" (Hu & Grove, 1991, p. 13). This difference in naming between these two cultures has made people confused and uncomfortable in cross-cultural interaction. The Chinese speakers frequently have problems in knowing how to address foreigners, and errors often occur. The Chinese trainees are so used to calling people by the last name following the Chinese order that in addressing their professors or supervisors, they put a title before their first names.

In conversation it is important and necessary to know how to initiate conversation and to know what kind of topics are suitable to discuss. Cultures vary in this respect, and offence can often be caused unintentionally by asking or discussing the "wrong" thing. One common question in China, for example, is to ask how much money a person earns. This is regarded, however, as an extremely personal and private affair in Canada, and people often do not know the exact salary of their family members. As most Chinese expect to know these details, problems seldom occur in this ares. There is no foolproof way to avoid culture-bound mistakes. For example, Canadians are often happy to talk about their families whether they are married or not. In China, since most people over 25 are married with children, Chinese trainees assume the situation is similar in Canada. On the other hand, some Westerners never marry at all, others marry quite late, and some marry but do not have children. So questions such as "How many children do you have?" and "Is your husband/wife with you?" in a conversation can cause some embarrassment to unmarried people because the wording of the question assumes that the person is married and has children. The embarrassment can be made even worse when the Chinese says "I am sorry" on hearing that the person is not married or does not have children.

Stereotyping or Over Generalization

When interactions with another culture are guided by stereotyped ideas and overgeneralization, there can often be serious disputes. For example, Chinese trainees always arrive a little bit late rather than being punctual when they have an appointment with their Canadian friends. Before they come to Canada they are told that whenever one is invited to a Canadian party, it is more polite to be a couple of minutes late than to arrive early. Accordingly, some trainees are constantly late for appointments and never think to apologize. While they intended to be polite, they turned out to be the very opposite.

Another stereotype held by Chinese trainees is that Canada is a rich country; consequently, one does not have to be concerned about maintaining office equipment or wasting laboratory materials. Trainees sometimes repeated experiments again and again without recognizing the fact that the budget was tight and the requisitions for certain laboratory materials and budget monies required a lot of paper work and time. They had the same attitude towards photocopying. Out of courtesy, the supervisors often told the Chinese trainees to copy the materials they needed for their work. The Chinese trainees decoded this to mean that they were allowed to copy anything. In one case, at the end of a semester, the cost was much higher than expected. At this stage the supervisors felt very awkward talking with the trainees; they hoped the trainees would become aware of the problem, but the trainees were so constrained by the stereotype that they were insensitive. The result was usually that the supervisors had to stop trainees from using the photocopiers, which inevitably hurt the feelings of both parties.

Conflict of Different Value Systems

Differences in customs and value system may also cause problems. In China, people do not think of giving a formal invitation to people to have tea or coffee. So often when trainees are invited to have tea or coffee together with their supervisors or professors, they may respond "no" because they think paying for tea or coffee is a waste of money. This is a radically different response to what the Canadians expect. During our orientation period this difference in cultural practice caused the Canadians great irritation. The Canadians said that when they invited the Chinese to participate in more personal activities, they were often rejected outright, and this hurt their feelings. From the Canadians' point of view, the rejection means that the trainees are not interested in them. This problem seems minor, but it reflects a cultural difference. It also reminds me of a story told by a trainee at the CCLC. When he first went to work in Canada, he was invited by his professor to have dinner at his home. The trainee assumed that his professor would prepare him a big banquet. In reality, it was totally different from what he had imagined: spaghetti was the only dish the host offered. He was so disappointed that he concluded that his professor did not show enough respect to him, and Canadians were not as generous and hospitable as Chinese. In China, especially in this trainee's region, if a person invites one to have dinner at his or her place, (s)he will offer at least eight dishes. This trainee regarded his way of treating people as superior to his Canadian professor's so his *first impression* lasted a long time and a matter of a cultural difference became a prejudice.

In Canada people are used to making phone calls to friends only at certain times during the day or evening. In China, as telephones are not that common, it seems to people that timing is not an issue. Therefore, even very late at night people may call family members and friends. When trainees came to Canada, they were not aware of the time conventions governing the use of the phone. They either called their Canadian friends too late in the evening or too early on the weekend mornings.

The difference in teacher-trainee relationships is another value issue that causes conflict and irritation in intercultural communication. Generally speaking, Chinese trainees tend to be more reserved due to their cultural upbringing. Therefore, in Chinese classrooms teachers are usually eloquent in their lectures while trainees are bent down over their desks quietly taking notes. Unlike Chinese classrooms, Canadian students, while listening to lectures, attending workshops and seminars, participate actively by asking questions and having non-verbal interactions with the professors. This obvious cultural contrast usually leads to misunderstanding when Chinese trainees act in their culturally accepted manner in Canadian settings. During a trainees' orientation at PaROC there was a library tour and a safety seminar. As most of the trainees were products of the Chinese education system and had never been trained in intercultural communication, they looked at the speakers but made no active response to what the speakers said. As a result, the seminar leaders were disappointed with the Chinese trainees' reactions and even became angry. The Chinese trainees, on the other hand, probably thought that they were being polite and well mannered for not asking questions or showing people how much they knew without being specially asked.

Inadequateness of Language Proficiency

Since the English offered in classes in China is still out of touch, unconversational, and divorced from real life situations, most Chinese trainees feel a gap between the English they learn in China and the English they use in Canada. They find it difficult to express their ideas properly and to understand what people are talking about in conversation. For example, some Canadian assistants commented that they were disappointed by the failure of most of the trainees to complete the negotiated cultural orientation activities and thought it was inconsiderate of them not to call to cancel or confirm their participation. As Chinese are well-known for their politeness, it is the cultural and language barriers that sometimes put the Chinese trainees in a very unfavourable position. Most Chinese trainees have difficulty making phone calls; some are even afraid of picking up the phone when they first arrive in Canada. Instead of acting in a Canadian way, they sometimes tell their Chinese friends to give excuses to their Canadian teachers at the last minute; this is not considered polite from the Canadian point of view.

Another source of irritation caused by language problems was the Chinese trainees' inability to use English for more than greetings, their area of specialization, or day to day topics. Sometimes they whispered during lectures or when instructions were given. Other times they talked about or laughed at things in their mother tongue behind the driver in the car or bus. This made some Canadians feel uncomfortable and upset. Then a lack of language proficiency resulted in culturally inappropriate behaviour.

Conclusion

"Every human being has an immense amount of learning to do before he can become culturally competent" (Zeitlin, 1984, p. 21). The Chinese trainees who come to Canada after their country's 30 years' isolation from the world are like infants who are starting to walk and acquire their mother tongue and culture. Even though they may fall down at the beginning stages, each failure will make them smarter and more effective. I believe the Chinese trainees will benefit a great deal from their culture-bound mistakes as they become more aware of their own culture and more objective about cultural similarities and differences. For the Chinese trainees, realizing the importance of cross-cultural effectiveness will definitely have an impact on their own intercultural communication and benefit them in the long run, both in their personal development and in their country's economic advancement.

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Self-Denial Versus Self-Praising: An Issue in Cross-Cultural Communication Between Chinese and Canadians

Li Zhengming (James)

Communication never occurs in a vacuum. Instead, all our communication takes place constantly in a social and cultural setting or environment. In most cases, understanding the behaviours of those who share the same or similar culture seems to be less problematic as people who have the same or similar culture are comparatively familiar with each other's ways of thinking, expressing, acting and reacting. However, it appears much more difficult for people in one culture to understand the behaviour(s) of people in another culture in cross-cultural communication encounters. Due to the lack of cultural awareness of one another, both Chinese and Canadians may face potential misunderstandings or misinterpretations in their interactions.

One of the ways that Chinese show modesty is through self-denial, that is, having been praised by others, Chinese tend to disparage themselves by responding verbally that they do not deserve to be complimented for what they have done. However, when Chinese still apply their self-denial in the midst of self-praising Canadians, their modest responses to Canadians' compliments may turn out to be embarrassing to some Canadians or contradictory to these Chinese' good intentions. Three typical dialogues below can demonstrate how Chinese and Canadian reactions vary in reply to compliments.

Dialogue 1 happened between two Chinese in a Chinese restaurant. After the Chinese customer finished his meal, he complimented the owner of the restaurant on the food:

A: "It's excellent."

B: "Please excuse our poor skill," the owner of the restaurant said. "You know we don't have time or enough hands to prepare it carefully" (Liu, 1984, pp. 105-106).

Dialogue 2 occurred between two Canadians:

A: I thought your presentation was excellent.

B: Yes, I thought I did well. I'm glad you enjoyed it.

No misunderstanding happens between the interlocutors in their communication in the above two dialogues since each pair shares the same culture. In Dialogue 1, both the message sender and the message receiver are Chinese. The self-denial produced by the owner of the restaurant is correctly interpreted as a sign of modesty by the customer. Thus, the owner of the restaurant easily gets his meaning across. Similarly, in Dialogue 2, the Canadian who encoded the message and the Canadian who decoded it are members of the same culture in which people would rather accept a positive comment (at least in form) than reject it. As a result, one Canadian's compliment is well received by another Canadian.

Unfortunately, in cross-cultural communication encounters, misunderstanding can be created immediately.

Dialogue 3 occurred between a Canadian and a Chinese:

A: Your English is very good. (the Canadian's compliment)

B: No. I still have a long way to go. (the Chinese self-denial)

In Chinese culture, the ability to preserve self-denial is marked as a sign of virtue or modesty. Yet, when Canadians' compliments are rejected by Chinese, Canadians tend not to value the Chinese self-denial as a sign of modesty. Instead, some Canadians may feel embarrassed as if they have made a wrong judgement, while some others are more likely to assume that self-denial is a strategy used to elicit more compliments. Although Canadians try to be friendly to the Chinese, and the Chinese try to be modest in front of Canadians, their cross-cultural encounters can still possibly end up in a communication breakdown. Dialogue 3 does show how the Chinese polite response failed to match the Canadian's good intention owing to their culturally influenced attitude towards compliments.

In fact, self-denial widely applied by the Chinese is closely connected with the Chinese attitude towards the value of individuals and the value of groups. Comparatively speaking, "Chinese culture consistently anchors high on collectivism" (Trubisky, Stella, & Lin, 1991, pp. 65-84). The Chinese prefer to signify the importance of joint efforts made by each of the group's members. In most cases, after the Chinese receive compliments for certain achievements that they have made, they tend to be reluctant to accept the compliments (at least in words). On the contrary, they prefer to articulate that they owe their achievements to their bosses who have supported them, and to their colleagues who have provided them with substantial assistance, etc. Chinese seem to be more inclined to place emphasis on the importance of cooperation even if an individual's contribution is viewed as an inseparable part of a certain achievement. In Chinese eyes, those who lay too much emphasis on themselves will possibly run counter to their original desire because they are unlikely to be culturally recognized or accepted by other Chinese. They believe that the acceptance of others' compliments by an individual is a sign of arrogance. Also, one's overstress on one's own potential merely signals that he/she attempts to show off.

In contrast, North Americans have a tendency to accept others' compliments "as a kind of recognition of their individual efforts" (Zuo, 1988, pp. 117-136). It appears that Canada is a country with a highly individualistic culture, and Canadians are more likely to emphasize their own importance rather than collective efforts.

It's interesting for the Chinese to watch the U.S. presidential election campaign. One of the speeches made by George Bush indicates that he sees himself as the most qualified candidate to be re-elected American president. He states that the next four years are very important to the United States; he does not want to see inexperienced people run the country... Here, Bush has definitely categorized other presidential candidates as inexperienced. Meanwhile, another presidential candidate, Bill Clinton, has also tried hard to win more votes by promising that he will bring more benefits to middle-class Americans if he is elected president...

The United Stated is such a competitive society that Americans have to demonstrate their personal strengths (e.g. academic background, employment experience, etc.) before they reach their goals. Since the presidential election is a type of fierce competition for the top position in the United States, the presidential candidates naturally have to do everything possible to display their eligibility for this most prestigious job. Yet, those speeches of self-praise made by the presidential candidates are not culturally appealing to Chinese at all, for, on the one hand, the Chinese political system is established on a selection basis, not on an election basis, in terms of choosing top government officials; on the other hand, self-praising acts are often carried out by those who overestimate their ability in the public, but fail to keep their promises later on. Subsequently, self-praising people are usually looked down upon as untrustworthy. That's why the Chinese have a tendency not to praise themselves. Instead, they are expected to be self-effacing by verbally rejecting others' compliments to them as a sign of virtue even though they do feel at ease upon hearing others' compliments.

Mention should be made that while self-denial is commonly associated with one's modesty in China, it is occasionally misused as a tool; to be more exact, as a secret weapon by those Chinese who have a hidden purpose in mind. For example, when Person A finds that Person B's English is excellent, and hopes that Person B can help him with his English, Person A can first compliment Person B by saying that "Your English is so good." If Person B simply rejects Person A's compliment by uttering that his English is very poor, his self-denial may convey the implication that he has no interest in teaching Person A English. Person B's refusal is communicated while Person A is not turned down directly. Furthermore, some Chinese may try to defeat others with the help of self-denial in job-hunting. For instance, if two interviewees with the same academic background apply for the only position in a company, the one who can successfully impress his/her interviewers with more modesty may have a greater chance to get the job, for modesty itself may be one of the merits that the interviewers are looking for. This is more like a feint in martial arts (this movement functions as superficial self-denial or false modesty), followed by an attack (this movement functions as self-praising) to produce more strength. Again, this person's ultimate goal is reached through self-denial.

To communicate across cultures, one ought to be conscious that since the communicative rules vary from culture to culture, strategies to cope with this type of communication should be also adjusted accordingly. The language learners should be first made aware that they must be mentally prepared to encounter more diversities rather than expect more similarities in their cross-cultural communication. In order to enhance cross-cultural awareness, learners must gain an insight into the history, conventions, customs, habits, and life-style of that target culture. Second, with the accumulation of the learners' knowledge about a new culture, they should be extremely cautious when they make value judgements because there is no such thing as one culture which is better than, or superior to, another culture. Moreover, when misunderstanding or misinterpretation really occurs, learners should seek to understand the relationship between outward behaviour and its origin(s) so that they may hopefully find some means for improvement. Last, but certainly not least, the learners are expected to, if possible, have adequate and direct contacts with native speakers of the target language. Through their personal experience or observation, they are supposed to make generalizations of their own rules and regulations for better cross-cultural interactions in future... In short, one makes progress by making errors, and one makes gains in communication through communicating. The ultimate objective for a successful second language learner to achieve is to be not only bilingual but bicultural as well.

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Meetings of Differences:
Conflicts in Chinese and Western Meetings

Ken Keobke

The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) which hopes, as in all its projects worldwide, that a cross-cultural awareness between cultural groups will arise. In October of 1990, a series of workshops were held for the CCLC teachers with Michael Miner, Thomas Vulpe and Luo Guangqing of International Briefing Associates (IBA). IBA preceded these sessions with several private chats aimed at identifying the factors that could interfere with the CCLC staff successfully carrying out the centre's mandates of language teaching and testing, teacher training, institution building, consultancy, and extension centre operation.

The surprising conclusion of these initial discussions was that the area of greatest difficulty and misunderstanding in the operation of the CCLC was neither to do with teaching materials nor methods, but rather with meetings. In the many meetings, large and small, that the administration and teachers had previously organized to coordinate the affairs of the centre, both the Chinese and the Canadian sides found fault with various aspects of the other's conduct. Both sides felt that these perceptions/problems disrupted the smooth operation of the centre and made for poor relations at times. To sort through the myriad of component problems that had been identified, a series of workshops for teachers only over two days were set up to ferret out the source of these differences and to examine the misunderstandings that had led to them.

In the first workshop, Miner produced statistics from the recently published *Cross Cultural Effectiveness* by Daniel J. Kealey. He condensed the findings into a pair of startlingly contradictory statistics: of the group of Canadian overseas technical advisors sampled worldwide, 75% gave themselves a 75% rating of highly satisfactory for the project while the host nationals with whom they worked gave a figure of only 20% to their perception of the Canadian's effectiveness (Kealey, 1991, p. 35). With this in mind, and the awareness that the centre is to be transferred to sole Chinese management and control in two years, the two days of workshops were organized around a series of questions beginning with:

How do Canadians conduct meetings? and,
How do Chinese conduct meetings?

For these first two questions, the Canadian and Chinese teachers were sequestered separately. Among the Canadian conclusions about their own meetings was that it is acceptable to have open confrontation as the emotions behind *heated discussions* are seldom carried over. But generally, Canadians saw their own meetings as well run and orderly, progressing efficiently through points of business in a manner that would make an ideal textbook case for *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Similarly, the Chinese characterized their own meetings as mainly calm and informative, since, generally speaking, meetings in China are used to present information or decisions which have been taken elsewhere, and this is what the Chinese teachers at the CCLC were used to.

Of course, both these descriptions are angelic idealizations and both sides were quick to point out instances when each had walked past shouting matches held by the other nationality. These and other truths emerged more fully as reports of each group reported on their perceptions of the other.

As to their views of joint meetings, the Chinese felt that the Canadians stressed the importance of the individual at the expense of the group and that most discussions soon deteriorated into simple struggles for power that had little to do with the issues at hand. They were particularly distressed that so much meeting time was taken up by what came to be labelled as the category "tapes and toilet paper"; decisions about the day to day running of the centre into which Canadians were always all too willing to inject opinion, regardless of how trivial the issue. One particularly clear Chinese criticism of the joint meetings had all the beauty of a classical proverb: "To make paper is so important".

For their part, the Canadians felt that the Chinese offered minimal input at all meetings and, unless called upon, kept silent, often avoiding eye contact. If called upon for an opinion or to take a side, they were likely to demur and offer comments of an ambiguous and non-committal nature, most often voicing cautious agreement with a previously raised point.

Once these views were aired, the groups were again sequestered to discuss what process governs meetings. On the Canadian side, process loosely follows Robert's Rules of Order, but is far more informal unless the person in charge feels the meeting has bogged down in detail or humour. It was also recognized that the official chair of the meeting had often relinquished the post (sometimes unwittingly or unwillingly) to a more powerful personality who, for a personal agenda as simple as wanting to get the meeting over with, directed questions, offered conclusions, declared matters dropped, and proceeded onto the next point.

On the Chinese side, a meeting is usually called for information purposes only and all those who attend realize that the decisions will be made elsewhere, if, in fact, they haven't already been made. Meetings are hierarchical and it is always the eldest who is consulted first; experience is held more important than originality or problem-solving ability, if only for the purpose of saving face.

The next task set for four groups comprised of both nationalities was to examine and identify similarities and differences in process. These four separate presentations ended up dwelling on similar points which can be compared and contrasted in column form:

Canadian	Chinese
Very concerned about time being wasted.	Little concern about time in meetings; they will be over when they are over.
High sense of individualism and self importance. The individual is important.	*Small potato* mentality; one's position is not greater than the group. One's connections are important.

Production: self worth is derived from what we do.	A "Model Worker" is only asked to do more.
Occupation is part of one's identity.	Each is only one of many.
Jockeying for position is constant because roles are loosely defined and ever-changing.	Status is fixed on age and experience.
Level of dedication is high because there are always opportunities for advancement: promotions; status; references; another line on one's curriculum vitae.	There is no motivation and few rewards for higher dedication. Those few opportunities for advancement are based on experience or relationships to those in power.
Job security based on performance.	Job security assured although at the expense of mobility.
Little worry about being labelled a "trouble maker"; although one doesn't always rock the boat, there is little fear of doing so. "The squeaky wheel gets the grease and the recognition."	Two proverbs: "The nail that sticks out is hammered down. The first bird out of the forest is shot."
Widely different educational backgrounds and work experiences on which to draw.	Very homogenous backgrounds meaning that opinions are already shared.
Personality conflicts often enter meetings.	Unspoken politics and nepotism have a strong negative influence on hierarchy.

There are many ways in which one could group these differences, one set being role of the teacher, cultural background, and attitude toward one's job. Triandis, Brislin & Hui might characterize such differences as occurring over a Western-Asian/individualism-collectivism divide in which idiocentric and allocentric stereotypes become visible (Triandis et al, 1988). In fact, speaking generally about these differences served to highlight specific points of conflict, examples where one side began to apply pejorative adjectives to the other: overly emotional; immodest; lazy; disrespectful; impolite; ostentatious; obscure; non-committal; disinterested; intolerant.

Most of these expressions and the feelings behind them could be defused were they to be broken down and identified as culturally appropriate behaviours for the group which produced them and in fact, interpretations and discussions of these examples served to acquaint and sensitize each side with the others' viewpoint. In at least one case, such discussion served to clear up a serious misunderstanding: one senior Chinese teacher considered it ignorantly ethnocentric of Canadians to conduct their classes in a *Canadian* way; that is with emphasis on the Communicative Approach, when the program was based in China and teaching Chinese trainees.

This led to the clarification that because the program was to prepare trainees for a Canadian academic setting, it was deemed appropriate that they receive their instruction in a manner anticipating that which they were most likely to receive in Canada, but also including those aspects of the more traditional teaching method in China which proved beneficial to the trainees. This is a basic philosophy of the CCLC, and the worth of the seminar was proven in that it was able to elicit such an important question which in turn served to elucidate a key difference in the CCLC's singular cross cultural setting; unlike many programmes where the foreigner is expected to make the major adjustments/concessions, in the case of the CCLC, it is necessary for both sides to adopt not just an understanding of the other culture, but also an ability to switch back and forth, acting appropriately as the situation demands. Essentially for both Canadians and Chinese, this means adopting second culture coping strategies.

Seelye (1985, pp. 204-5) lists five categories (also recounted in Brislin, 1981, pp. 277-79) which reflected the behaviours of individuals, but which might also describe the behaviour of groups. For the first four of these categories, I give examples which are among those which were visible at various times in isolation or combination in meetings at the CCLC:

1. *Avoidance*, a non-acceptance of second-culture patterns. Example, Canadians and Chinese continue to act within meetings as they always have, regardless of the other's differences.
2. *Substitution* of second-culture patterns for the first-culture patterns. Example, during meetings, the Chinese adopt and participate in the Canadian model.
3. *Addition* of second-culture patterns to first-culture patterns. Example, when the meeting is being chaired by a Chinese or is concerned with Chinese issues, the Canadian behaves in what he believes are the conventions of a Chinese meeting.
4. *Synthesis*, or recombination of behaviour from first and second cultures, where both cultural influences are simultaneously apparent. Example, a meeting in which the Canadian chair defers and calls upon Chinese speakers on the basis of age but calls on Canadians in no fixed order.

There do not seem to have been apparent examples of Seelye's fifth coping strategy, *resynthesis*, where an original integration of two cultures is effected, resulting in a novel third-culture pattern. Perhaps some manifestation of this behaviour will occur as each nationality works toward or away from accommodating the other.

Other important points that came forward included the role of silence in Chinese dialogue; what Canadians, queueing for position to speak, see as an opportunity to interrupt, the Chinese understand as a sign of respect and thought. When asked a question, the Chinese consider it fitting to proceed only after a moment's reflection whereas Canadians interpret this pause as a sign that the individual has not been paying attention and may need to be prompted again. Canadians interpret silence as disinterest; Chinese interpret it as agreement.

Another point was the role of note taking. The Chinese seldom, if ever, take notes and, for many, the practice is, perhaps, a reminder of the "Cultural Revolution" where collected notes would be consulted for later interpretation and persecution on trumped up charges. The Chinese, although never having asked the question before, were generally curious why so many of the Canadians felt it necessary to take notes in meetings, particularly as the CCLC usually publishes minutes of most meetings.

This prompted the Canadians to examine their reasons for taking notes. Included were some less obvious explanations: a technique to inform another speaker, particularly an administrator, that s/he would be held responsible for comments and promises; something to make one appear to be involved in a meeting if one has nothing to contribute orally; an excuse for eliciting clarification or pacing the meeting as in, "Excuse me, could you just say that again so I can get it down?"

A third issue, so obvious yet so often forgotten, was the simple fact that for the Chinese, English is not their native language, and they cannot always follow the emotionally charged exchanges of Canadian discussions/diatribes. When asked a question, many are not allowed the time to mentally translate the question, think of an answer, and translate it back into English.

All participants agreed that the sessions were worthwhile and stressed the need for them to continue on an ongoing basis. It was also suggested that cultural seminars be held for students, staff, and administrators during which various topics covering aspects of life in Canada such as religion, table manners, and entertainment be discussed in a forum that would bring out the similarities and differences in attitude and practice between Canada and China. In terms of meetings, it was felt that clear agendas should be introduced, and Chinese teachers asked to be prepared ahead of time to speak on selected items. Such involvement might, over time, lead to overturning the feeling among some of the Chinese staff that they cannot make a difference and to demonstrating to the Canadians the need for other than *Roberts rules of Order* in cross-cultural situations.

Educational programs are always meeting-intensive, perhaps particularly so in a cross-cultural context. If those meetings are to be effective vehicles of structure and change, then both sides will do better to make certain that they have sensitivity to, and understanding of, the other nationality. And, as meetings are rule-driven socio/cultural transactions, their effectiveness will depend on the effort taken to ensure that both sides are operating with the same rules.

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Dimensions of Cross-Cultural Teaching

Hermann F. Schwind

My contribution to your special edition will be an attempt to relate my research in cross-cultural management training and development to the field of education in a cross-cultural setting and, specifically, to our EFL teachers' training in Canada. Although I have done some work on China (Schwind, 1985, 1989), the focus of my cross-cultural research has been on Japan, specifically Japanese management (Schwind & Peterson, 1977; Adams, Peterson & Schwind, 1988). However, cross-cultural research is not nation-bound. I will, therefore, look at some of the outcomes of my research to see what we can learn from it which may be relevant to cross-cultural education. Specifically, I would like to look at the essential dimensions which should be part of any cross-cultural education program.

One of my MBA students did her MRP (Master Research Project) on the type of preparatory training large Canadian international business organizations were offering to their employees who were destined to go abroad to work in subsidiaries or joint ventures (Wong, 1986). Not to our great surprise, but still shocking, was the result: the 53 respondents of the 150 largest Canadian companies surveyed (which have subsidiaries and joint ventures abroad) reported that they offered no (zero!) preparatory training for their employees. It came not as a surprise because our literature review had told us that US companies were only marginally more concerned with preparing their managers and supervisors for work in another culture (Baker & Ivancevich, 1971).

Undoubtedly, there are a number of reasons for this (Schwind, 1985), but it is still difficult to believe that even now large companies do a very inadequate job of familiarizing their supervisors and employees with the requirements for working with a diverse international staff. They leave it to their staff to learn to cope with the new situation by trial and error, a very costly way to learn[1].

One of the reasons why so little cross-cultural management training is offered may be that there is no clear understanding of what should be the objectives and contents of such programs. What is really required of a person to behave properly and work effectively in a foreign culture? Effective behavior would include the following: communication patterns, ways of decision making, information gathering and dispensing, giving orders, cooperation and coordination with local staff, interpersonal relationships and more. But behavior change is probably not enough.

Relevant information on what should be included in a cross-cultural teaching and training program can be found in research studies on acculturation conducted by the American military services. The Navy Center for Research and Education in Denver, Colorado, developed the following strategies for cross-cultural education:

1. cognitive - this stage emphasizes knowledge about another culture; for example, customs, values, and social institutions through reading books and observing films;

2. affective - at this stage an attempt is made to change the attitudes of trainees toward another culture by being exposed to stimuli from this culture and being asked to respond to it; for example, through critical incidents, culture assimilator and case studies;
3. behavioral - at this applied stage, trainees are expected to behave appropriately under certain conditions in different situations, for example, through role-playing, simulation and experiential exercises.

A number of experts in the field expand on the above guidelines and go into more detail on goals and objectives of cross-cultural education and training programs (Brislin & Pederson, 1976; Gudykunst, Wiseman & Hammer, 1977; Seelye, 1970, 1974). Based on my own research (Schwind, 1977, 1987) and others already mentioned above, there seems to be a consensus that the following dimensions have to be included in any cross-cultural teaching and training program in order to ensure a comprehensive coverage:

1. cultural sensitivity (understanding one' own culture and its impact on one's own behavior);
2. sensitivity toward the behavior of others;
3. general knowledge about the target culture (historical development, values customs, social institutions);
4. tolerance (acceptance of different values, customs, behaviors);
5. ability to adapt (that is, to adapt appropriate behavior; understand social relations, such as superior-subordinate relationships, relations between sexes and different age groups; willingness to eat local food; willingness do develop social ties with locals);
6. ability to translate and apply newly acquired insights and skills in an organizational environment, that is, to relate parent company's systems to that of the local organization and vice versa).

Although the above dimensions make specific reference to business and management environments, they are not unique to these fields, but can be generalized to education (Brislin, 1981; Brislin and Segall, 1985) and consultants fields (Lippit and Hoopes, 1978).

How does the CCLCP training approach compare with the above recommendations? The CCLCP has two in-country training modules for ESL teachers hired to go to China: a three day meeting at Saint Mary's University (SMU) and a five-day session at the CIDA office in Ottawa. The first acquaints the teachers with the administrative part of the program and familiarizes them with the language test and curriculum. The CIDA training has a heavy dose of CIDA specific topics, but includes host culture related items such as (according to a 1991 training schedule):

host country orientation (political, economic environment)
cross-cultural communication
health issues
introduction to Asian religions
information exchange with Canadian returnees
information exchange with Host Country national

It appears that the CIDA culture training has some components of the cognitive dimension, is light on the affective, and void on the behavioral dimensions.

It could be argued that most ESL teachers selected by the CCLCP already have significant overseas experience. Most do, but some have no experience with China or other Asian countries. It would be interesting to know whether the current ESL teachers and members of the Canadian administrative staff feel that the preparatory training program offered at home is adequately covering the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of the work environment in China.

Several assessments of the effectiveness of the CCLCP and the CCLC have been done (Burnaby and Cumming, 1986a; Burnaby, Cumming, and Belfiore, 1986b), but these reports did not cover the preparation part. Perhaps it is time to have another look?

Endnote

1. One vice president of a large US food company told me how he ruined negotiations with a Japanese company on a joint venture agreement because he unknowingly insulted his Japanese counterpart. He had no preparatory training before being sent abroad. He estimated his company's loss because of the failed negotiations at $10 million.

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My Cultural Baggage is on its Way from the Airport: One Perspective on English Language Teaching in China

Perry Shearwood

The theory and the practice of English language teaching have an uneasy relationship. The People's Republic of China is one setting where the interaction between theory and practice has become a problem, as the state pursues a policy of modernization requiring the learning of foreign languages with 50 million Chinese studying English. Which theoretical principles will guide this undertaking and what value is to be assigned to current practice are questions for the foreign and Chinese teacher. This paper will relate the theory and practice of English language teaching in China to a broader critical perspective on education emerging in the Western world.

My argument is nothing more than that foreign teachers of English in China need to reflect critically on the assumptions which inform their practice, in particular the assumptions about their role in the classroom. I have found the resources on which I draw herein to offer concepts which I found useful in making sense of my own experience in China. As one brief resident in the Middle Kingdom and with limited abilities in the Chinese language, I beg the indulgence of those with different vantage points.

At the beginning of my first writing class at the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC), I informed my students that I would not correct all the errors in their writing and that peer correction and self-expression would be emphasized. No one said much but everybody looked quite glum at the prospect. The next class, I asked them to write anonymously what their expectations of the course were. The message was clear: "Don't worry too much about self-expression, but teach us the forms that will permit us to write well in English." So began an experience in which my assumptions were challenged in a productive way. I hope my students would say the same. Some of the contradictions that were worked out in practice are articulated at a theoretical level in the discussion which follows.

Emerging Critical Perspectives in English Language Teaching

Two recent articles in *TESOL Quarterly* have examined the relationship between the theory and practice of English language teaching and drawn attention to the political dimension of this enterprise (Peirce, 1989, Pennycook, 1989). Both have taken a critical approach to language teaching theory and deconstructed certain current terminology in the field: the concept of method in the Pennycook article and the concept of communicative competence in the Peirce article. Pennycook focuses on how the construction of the concept of method reproduces inequality, with particular reference to a male theorist/female practitioner divide, while Peirce looks at how the construction of the concept of communicative competence reproduces inequality because it leaves no space to question how inequality is embedded in what is sociolinguistically appropriate. These authors see educational theory as validating power relationships in language teaching and learning. For them, this form of knowledge is socially constructed and not objective or neutral. In this, they draw on the work of such philosophers as Foucault (1980) who reject "the tyranny of globalizing discourses with their hierarchy and all their privileges of a theoretical avant-garde" (p. 83).

The attainment of communicative competence by the learner has come to be seen in recent years as the goal of language teaching. This concept has been suggested both by Campbell and Wales (1970) and by Hymes (1972) to provide a place for sociocultural factors in linguistic theory, factors omitted by Chomsky (1965) in his conceptualization of linguistic competence. Canale and Swain (1980) relate this concept to language teaching.

In questioning this concept, Peirce (1989) advances the position that:

> As ESL teachers, we need to address the persistent question of whether our concern with communicative competence ... limits the possibilities for growth in our students by emphasizing what is appropriate as opposed to empowering students by encouraging them to explore what might be desirable (p. 409).

Hymes derived his use of the term "appropriate" from cultural anthropology, a discipline which, as an aspect of its methodology, posits a subject integrated into a culture with more or less fixed boundaries (Hymes 1972, p. 285). Peirce's formulation, which she explicates in the context of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, allows for a consideration of cultures interacting in relations of dominance and subordination. By advocating the replacement of "appropriate" by "possible" or "desirable", Peirce is proposing a model of language competence which takes into account change, particularly in the sphere of power relations.

Canale and Swain (1980) see "the description of the communicative needs of a given group of second language learners" as a necessary basis for communicative language teaching (p. 36). Further, they suggest that "classroom activities reflect those communication activities that the learner is most likely to engage in" (p. 33). Peirce's work causes us to reflect upon who determines the learners' needs and the activities they will engage in and whose interests that decision serves. To a certain extent, Canale and Swain anticipate this development of their theory by assuming that "a theory of communicative competence interacts (in as yet unspecified ways) with a theory of human interaction and with other systems of human knowledge (e.g. world knowledge)" (p. 29). The notion of a pedagogy of possibility which Peirce takes from Simon (1987, 1988) can be seen as specifying a relationship between language teaching theory and social theory. This is consistent with an emerging body of work which is trying to integrate sociolinguistics with social theory in a manner which relates language use to the distribution of power (access to valued resources) in particular communities (e.g. Heller, in press; Martin-Jones, 1989; Gal, 1988; Woolard, 1985).

Canale and Swain (1980), insofar as their work is specific rather than general, are referring to the teaching of core French in Ontario. However, one of their points represents an assumption that foreign teachers may bring with them to China:

> In view of the greater emphasis placed on the teacher's role as instigator of and participant in meaningful communication, the teacher

> must have a fairly high level of communicative competence in the second language in order to carry out this role effectively (p. 33).

Where does this leave the Chinese teacher of English, with limited opportunity to use English for communication, unable to postpone the task of teaching until clearly specified rules of use for English appear, and perhaps facing the expectation by foreign colleagues that communicative language teaching is best and should be used in the classroom? I will return later to the perspective of the Chinese teacher of English on communicative language teaching.

While Peirce focuses on communicative competence, Pennycook (1989) singles out the concept of method for attention. She demonstrates that the idea of teaching method lacks conceptual validity and coherence. While positivist theorists would tend to see present-day communicative methods as the culmination of linear progress in research and practice, she clearly shows an assortment of ways of teaching language have existed over history, succeeding each other in cyclical fashion and reflecting the social, political, cultural, and intellectual climate of the times. Do methods exist and are we safe in recommending particular methods to our foreign colleagues? Pennycook gives three reasons why these questions should be posed:

> First, there is little agreement as to which methods existed when, and in what order; second, there is little agreement and conceptual coherence to the terms used; and third, there is little evidence that methods ever reflected classroom reality (p. 602).

Pennycook, in an argument which relates to the specific case of teaching English in China, discusses the possible effects of this misguided faith in method:

> Many Western teachers abroad blithely assume the superiority of their methods. When we consider that, as I have argued, these methods are such loose constellations of techniques that they have little coherence, it suggests that Western teachers and teacher trainers frequently promote whatever techniques they happen to prefer, while supporting their views by recourse to the method concept and its supposedly scientific and advanced backing. Furthermore, teachers from those countries who have studied in the prestigious institutions in the West and, despite misgivings, have imbibed the TESOL orthodoxies, are faced, on their return, with the serious problem of the contradiction between the need to validate themselves and their newly gained knowledge, and the feeling that it is nevertheless largely inappropriate (p. 611).

This final point relates to the role of the language teacher as instigator of meaningful communication mentioned above, a role which for reasons to be discussed later the Chinese teacher of English may find difficult to assume. The concept of method serves to naturalize hierarchies of foreigner over local and theorist over practitioner.

The message I would take from the above is that the universalist claims of language teaching theory for the efficacy of one method or another must be treated with caution. Language teachers must reflect on the culturally-bound character of their educational theories and use this reflection as a basis for understanding their students' needs and negotiating classroom practice. Negotiation may not always take the form of face-to-face discussion between teacher and students leading to an agreement on classroom organization. Whatever form it takes, the important element is that the experience and potential of both students and teacher are taken into account in planning what goes on in the classroom and that the highest expectations possible of the participants are maintained.

Emerging Critical Perspectives in Educational Theory

Delpit (1988) makes what to me is a similar point in reference to the teaching of writing to Black and Alaskan Native children. Like Peirce and Pennycook, Delpit believes language teaching is political. For her, schooling is about access to the culture of power. Progressive teachers who deny by their classroom practice their own position of power obstruct the empowerment of their students. Cultural sensitivity is not just validating the experience of one's students and encouraging them to be creative and express themselves; it is also using one's knowledge of their culture to give them the tools to succeed in the context of the current educational system. What Delpit suggests is that society's expectations and how to achieve them are rendered vague by middle-class teachers uncomfortable in the powerful position of being able to define those expectations. This has a parallel in the desire of Chinese learners of English for authoritative, explicit formulations of what is correct English - a desire sometimes interpreted by their foreign teachers as an obsession with form at the expense of meaning.

According to Delpit, progressive methods, in an attempt to make each child an autonomous learner, can fail to make explicit what is required for success - knowledge that is implicit for children already members of the culture of power. While Delpit, like Pennycook, is skeptical of extravagant claims for the process approach to teaching writing, she is not just arguing for back to basics. What she proposes is that:

> Students must be taught the codes needed to participate fully in the mainstream of American life, not by being forced to attend to hollow, inane, decontextualized sub-skills, but rather within the context of meaningful communicative endeavours, that they must be allowed the resource of the teacher's expert knowledge, while being helped to acknowledge their own expertness, and that even while students are assisted in learning the culture of power, they must also be helped to learn about the arbitrariness of those codes, and about the power relations they represent (p. 296).

Obviously, language learning by Black children in American urban schools in all its variety is significantly different from language learning by students in the People's Republic of China in all its variety. Nevertheless, in both instances the relationship of theory and practice is problematic. Grand theories, imposed from outside, prescribe practice with often negative results. Theory must be grounded in the experience and potential of the particular group of students. A comment made recently by a progressive educator (Kohl, 1990) in response to Delpit's concerns could apply equally well to teaching in China:

> It may be necessary in certain circumstances to begin tight in order to loosen up. I don't believe there should be a fixed rule about what practice teachers have to follow in order to be open and progressive. It's more a matter of beginning where your students are and then moving in a democratic direction (p. 532).

Delpit's critical perspective on progressivism accords with the views expressed in recent work based on experience with minority language children in Australia (Kalantzis, Cope, Noble, & Poynting, 1990). In their opinion:

> Progressivism may well be potent as a technique, and culturally relevant to life in the late twentieth century, but in its more unrestrained guise in disadvantaged schools it is often unhelpful in failing to be explicit about knowledge and in failing to explain and justify its own epistemological appropriateness. The answer, perhaps, is curriculum which is more authoritative in its content and principles of organization, yet not authoritarian as a medium of instruction (p. 243).

Belief in the power of socially-received knowledge and paradigms of learning, considered by Kalantzis and her colleagues as in some ways truer to the nature of industrial society, may be shared by students in diverse settings. According to the Australian researchers:

> Pedagogy for "minority" students will be most effective when it is clear about the core social, linguistic and cognitive requirements of an advanced industrial society, yet when it is also sensitive to the differential pedagogical techniques necessary to achieve that end (p. 243).

To address the concerns of Delpit, Pennycook and Peirce we might add a third characteristic of effective pedagogy: that it open up the possibility of transforming the requirements of industrial society.

So what does all this have to do with China, anyway?

The importance of transcending culturally-bound theorizations of language teaching in order to encompass the needs, perspectives and expectations of the learners and the local language teachers is a thread that runs through the work of the authors already mentioned. One expectation in the Chinese setting may be that interaction in the language classroom will be teacher-centred. Hynes (1981), in her account of teaching in Chengdu in 1980, says that her students "would have loved us to spend one hundred per cent of our time at the front of the classroom, explaining in minute detail the structures of sentences and the meanings of words in a preferably famous text." She and her Canadian colleague felt, on the other hand, "that the role of the language teacher is to get students to practise and perform the broad range of things that we normally do with language" (p. 119). Traditionally, foreign languages have been taught in China using "academic study of grammar, literature, and in-depth analysis of literary texts" (Burnaby & Sun, 1989, p. 219). A rationale for this approach is that: "the most widely accepted view of learning in China is that it is memory-based. The teacher, or the textbook, has the knowledge. In order to acquire it, it is sufficient for the student to commit it to memory" (Maley, 1983, p. 104). The origins of this system have been located in Confucian philosophy. "The Confucian model of the stratified social hierarchy was transplanted into the classroom. The teacher's words were always truth and truths were to be parroted and memorized and not to be questioned" (Ting, 1987, p. 52). The role of the language teacher is to be expert in the grammar and literature of the target language, not in the methodology of teaching or the psychology of education.

In a recent survey of Chinese students of English (Johnson, 1989), it was found that, compared with Chinese teachers of English, native speakers are sometimes too informal in the classroom and sometimes have teaching styles which are very different from the traditional Chinese learning style, which makes the students feel they are not learning very much. The researcher interpreted these findings to indicate that "a large number of students feel that the teacher should behave in a manner suitable for a person holding a relatively high position within the society. The teacher should possess an air of authority" (p. 15).

Several of the Chinese teachers of English whose views are reported in Burnaby and Sun (1989):

> noted the strength of the traditional relationship in China between teachers and students, as well as the behaviours and teaching methods implied in this relationship. These strongly favour teacher-centred methods and structured curricula (p. 229).

They expressed some doubt as to whether Western teaching methods were always appropriate in China, particularly those aspects which presuppose a native speaker's ability to make extemporaneous judgments about the target language. They seem to be in a position similar to the teachers mentioned by Pennycook, caught in the contradiction between the strictures of orthodox language teaching theory and classroom reality.

The issue of teacher authority in the classroom has been addressed by Widdowson (1987). He distinguishes between the authoritative exercise of authority and and the authoritarian exercise of authority. If the foreign teacher relinquishes his or her authoritarian social position in order to promote self-regulating autonomous activity, it does not mean that he or she abdicates responsibility for being knowledgeable about the subject. This distinction may have to be made explicit, for the Chinese student may interpret learner-centred classroom practices in terms of a frame which associates diminished authority with teacher incompetence and consequent failure for the students.

Not only is the authority of the teacher respected in China but also the authority of the text:

> To achieve social harmony and to express the views of the group by referring to tradition and relying on accepted patterns of expression were the central purposes and practices of Chinese rhetoric. And in spite of tremendous political upheavals in the twentieth century, rhetoric in China still seems to function this way (Matalene, 1985, p. 795).

This respect for the authority of the text may sometimes express itself as a desire to imitate models when learning to write in English, anathema to the theory of the process approach.

One reason for explicit statements about the organization of text is that Chinese writing in English may manifest a "written discourse accent" (Wong, 1988, p. 8). One aspect of this may be a form of organization in which definitive summary statements of main arguments are delayed till the end, a pattern which Young (1982) has found in conversational exchanges as well. When I asked my students what the differences were between writing in English and Chinese, some wrote that Chinese was more indirect. One suggested that: "Only when you have finished reading an article in Chinese can you catch the meaning... The article usually ends with the main idea. It is called the eye of the dragon." Other students said there was little difference between writing in English and Chinese. One of these students wrote that the circuitous style of some writing in Chinese was not intrinsic to the language but that: "The key is in the different degree of freedom of expressing ideas". While reflecting critically on the process approach, the teacher should consider making explicit the conventions of English written discourse and taking into account students' expectations about effective classroom practice for teaching writing. If this means working in groups to devise thesis statements for selected non-trivial topics which form part of the thematic content of the course, one shouldn't be afraid because orthodoxy says thesis statements are out.

Sampson (1984) has related different expectations concerning exporting language teaching methods from Canada to China to the lack of "a conceptual framework in which the task of adjusting teaching methods developed in one country to the needs of another country" (p. 20). As the result of the lack of this framework, problems emerge. Foreign teachers could assume that "everything a developed country exports to developing countries is necessarily highly-developed, including ideas" (p. 20). Further, there is confusion between educational theories and scientific theories. Canadian ESL teachers criticize teaching and learning practices in China because "there is excessive focus on memorization, ... an excessive focus on reading and concomitant lack of emphasis on communicative activities in the classroom; ... classes are teacher-centred rather than learner-centred" (p. 27). These practices may be seen by foreign teachers as the result of ignorance rather than based on Chinese educational theories. Finally, there is technocratic imperialism. "This is a form of export of intellectual goods which claims to be value-free and, therefore, the goods are deemed appropriate for all countries. These intellectual goods are, however, laden with cultural and political values" (p. 21).

English language teaching in China is different from other contexts the foreign teacher may be familiar with in that English in China is not the dominant language that it is in English-speaking countries or their colonies or neo-colonies. Professionalization of English language teaching in the English-speaking world post-1945 and a boom in the production of language teaching theory paralleled the growth of American world domination. The Chinese student and teacher of English may not accept this implied language hegemony but are, nevertheless, confronted with language teaching theory derived in some way from it. The administration of language teaching is firmly in Chinese hands:

> As there are national English curricula with requirements set for English majors and non-English majors with respect to the four skills, vocabulary and grammar, the chief goal of most English programs is to meet the stated requirements. Methods used need to fit in with this specific situation (Yang, 1987, p. 29).

Foreign teachers must be aware of this, despite the conflict with an ideology which sees English as a neutral world-language, known and taught best by native speakers conversant with up-to-date theories and techniques developed in the Western academy. "The assumption that one can transplant educational innovations based on different theoretical assumptions and implying fundamental changes in methodology is neither realistic nor desirable" (Allen & Spada, 1982, p. 195).

Conclusion

The goal of communicative language teaching, the effective use of the target language, is a valid one. In the Chinese context, this goal may best be achieved by a synthesis of traditional and innovative techniques, as suggested by Maley (1985) and Harvey (1985). Further, language teaching and teacher training in China must be informed by what could be variously described as cultural sensitivity, negotiation, consultation or the ethnographic perspective. At the same time, we must recognize that our power and privilege as foreign teachers make these processes of negotiation difficult. Foreign teachers must reflect on and reexamine their theory and practice of language teaching in a spirit of resistance to the unthinking acceptance of hegemonic orthodoxies.

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Note

I would like to thank Monica Heller, Jim Cummins, Gabriella Pambianchi, Alistair Pennycook and Brian Morgan for their valuable comments on earlier versions of this paper. All errors, omissions and misconceptions are my own.

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Enseignement du français en milieu minoritaire multilingue: le PLCCC, un modèle original d'appui linguistique et culturel

Diane Huot

1. Introduction

L'atteinte des objectifs d'un programme de coopération internationale suppose notamment que les parties impliquées puissent communiquer entre elles de manière efficace et arrivent à transmettre avec succès l'ensemble des connaissances, si élémentaires ou spécialisées soient-elles. Or, la transmission de connaissances, quel que soit le domaine concerné, s'effectue au moyen d'un instrument de communication appelé "langue". Elle suppose que tous les participants à un programme donné partagent une langue commune pour pouvoir communiquer entre eux. Une partie ou l'ensemble de ces participants doit ainsi s'adonner à l'étude d'une langue étrangère (désormais L2) avec toutes les difficultés qu'une telle expérience comporte.

Afin d'aider les Chinois qui prennent part à des projets avec le Canada et, pour qui la question de la langue se pose de manière épineuse dans le cadre de tels projets, un modèle original et intéressant d'appui linguistique et culturel a été conçu il y a une dizaine d'années. Son application se déroule grâce à la participation des Gouvernements canadiens et chinois. Un appui est ainsi offert à tous les projets canadiens de coopération avec la Chine par le biais du *Programme linguistique et culturl.*

2. PLCCC

Ce programme comporte une composante anglophone et une composante francophone. Ces deux composantes se déroulent, d'une part en Chine, au Centre linguistique et culturel Canada/Chine (CLCC) logé à l'Université Normale de Beijing (U.N.B.) et, d'autre part, au Canada, dans le cadre des Centres régionaux d'orientation (CRO). L'ensemble de ce projet (tant le CLCC que les CRO) relève d'une seule agence canadienne d'exécution, soit l'Université St. Mary's à Halifax. La principale mission du CLCC est de voir à l'administration du Testcan en Chine (test évaluant le niveau de compétence en français L2), d'offrir aux boursiers et stagiaires chinois une formation linguistique et culturelle, et d'assurer au besoin le perfectionnement des enseignants qui composent le corps professoral du CLCC. Les CRO offrent respectivement des stages d'orientation, des stages pré-départ, des sessions de "debriefing", des programmes d'appui et diffusent de l'information auprès du public.

En cette année d'anniversaires - le dixième du CLCC et le quatre-vingt-dixième de l'U.N.B. - l'occasion est idéale pour parler du déroulement du programme de français du CLCC à l'intérieur de ce vaste ensemble, et aussi pour effectuer quelques réflexions sur les caractéristiques essentielles d'un tel programme.

3. Programme de français du CLCC et création d'un "milieu francophone"

Le CLCC offre deux programmes, l'un de français et l'autre d'anglais. Ces programmes, assurés respectivement par une équipe de professeurs d'anglais et une équipe de professeurs de français, relèvent d'une direction bicéphale canadienne et chinoise. Ils cohabitent dans les même lieux, en même temps qu'ils partagent certains services comme le secrétariat ou le laboratoire de langue. Chacune de ces deux équipes déploie de nombreux efforts pour arriver à recréer l'essentiel des caractéristiques propres au milieu anglophone ou francophone, chaque L2 étant enseignée dans un milieu minoritaire plurilingue.

Pour des raisons qu'il ne convient pas d'évoquer ici, les projets de l'ACDI (Agence Canadienne de Développement International) en Chine, susceptibles de se dérouler en français, ont été jusqu'à présent moins nombreux que les projets ayant lieu en anglais. Une telle situation a donné lieu à des différences importantes entre les deux programmes de L2, car le nombre de Chinois "francisants" inscrits au CLCC a été inévitablement plus petit que le nombre de Chinois apprenant l'anglais.

Cette disparité de nombre a initialement constitué un obstacle de taille pour le programme de français que souvent on examinait en regard de celui d'anglais. Dans ce dernier cas, la création d'un certain milieu qui parle la L2 enseignée (défi à relever par tout programme d'enseignement de L2 en milieu minoritaire quelle que soit la L2 enseignée) allait pouvoir se réaliser plus facilement dans un établissement chinois (ici l'U.N.B.) où l'anglais était enseigné comme première L2. Car l'offre d'un programme régulier d'anglais dans l'université chinoise d'accueil constituait une aide potentielle à l'enrichissement de ce milieu linguistique. La situation du français était moins heureuse sur ce plan, puisque dans ce même établissement chinois le français était enseigné comme deuxième ou troisième L2. Il apparaissait ainsi difficile au premier abord d'imaginer que l'on puisse arriver à assurer une formation linguistique et culturelle en français dans un milieu où l'on communiquait presqu'essentiellement en anglais ou en chinois. Mais ce premier constat, fondé sur des éléments externes comme le nombre de locuteurs potentiels, ne pouvait prendre en compte des éléments ponctuels et plus imprévisibles, qui varient selon chaque situation. Nous pensons ici aux caractéristiques propres d'une équipe donnée de professeurs, à la personnalité de ces derniers ou au type de dynamique susceptible de se créer au sein d'un groupe.

Or, ce sont en.partie des facteurs liés à la nature de l'équipe de professeurs qui, avec le temps, ont contribué à aplanir certaines des difficultés à prime abord jugées difficiles à surmonter. Par exemple, les professeurs recrutés pour travailler dans le programme de français du CLCC ont su faire véritablement équipe. Conscients de l'ampleur du défi à relever, mais à aucun moment démotivés, ils ont fait preuve de créativité dans la mise sur pied d'un programme qui serait adapté au public visé et tiendrait compte de circonstances particulières. Ce programme a par la suite été amélioré grâce à des efforts soutenus. Et au cours de ces années, un ensemble de facteurs, dont leur ténacité, ont suscité une collaboration accrue de la direction, de façon à faire évoluer graduellement la situation et à amener le programme de français à prendre une place au CLCC.

L'invention de ces professeurs et leur acharnement ont contribué à éliminer certains des éléments jugés d'abord moins heureux. Les membres de cette équipe sont arrivés ainsi à créer une forme de "milieu français" qui à certains égards est de qualité égale à celui offert par d'autres programmes analogues, qui dispensent un enseignement de L2 en milieu minoritaire, et qui ont également de nombreuses difficultés à surmonter.

4. Matériel d'enseignement et rôle du professeur

Outre les éléments liés à la nature de l'équipe de professeurs et à la contribution de l'administration, le développement de matériel d'enseignement et la réédification du rôle du professeur de L2 constituent des réalisations caractéristiques du programme de français du CLCC. L'équipe de professeurs canadiens et chinois a accompli dans ce sens un travail intéressant.

Un matériel d'enseignement a ainsi été organisé dans l'optique de l'approche communicative, approche encore peu répandue en Chine. Initialement gênée par la pénurie de matériel dit "communicatif", qui serait adapté au public visé par le CLCC, l'équipe a su remédier habilement à la situation. De plus, le caractère multiculturel de celle-ci a permis l'introduction dans le matériel de valeurs véhiculées par la L2. Il a favorisé la réalisation d'unités d'enseignement qui prennent véritablement en compte les valeurs socioculturelles de la langue d'arrivée et celles de la langue de départ. D'où le nom attribué à juste titre à ce programme de "formation linguistique et culturelle".

Par ailleurs, l'approche communicative impliquant des modifications dans le rôle de l'enseignant, cette équipe de professeurs de français a entrepris avec beaucoup d'adresse des démarches pour modifier les attentes des apprenants quant au rôle traditionnel de l'enseignant. Il n'a pas toujours été facile de convaincre ces derniers que celui qui, dans la tradition chinoise représentait avec respect la source du savoir, devenait désormais dans la classe de L2 une personne-ressource, un facilitateur ou un organisateur des activités de la classe, l'ensemble de ces rôles devant être assurés avec une grande discrétion. Il n'est toujours pas facile d'apporter une telle modification à cette longue tradition, mais le CLCC s'est engagé sur la voie d'une évolution graduelle.

5. Agents de suivi

A l'instar de plusieurs projets de l'ACDI, le PLCCC bénéficie de la collaboration d'agents de suivi (A.S.), dont l'un d'entre eux oeuvre dans le cadre du programme de français en Chine. De manière générale, l'A.S. est indépendant d'un programme donné, puisqu'il relève d'un supérieur qui oeuvre à l'ACDI.

Dans le cadre du PLCCC, le rôle de l'A.S. pour la composante francophone a consisté à produire des avis sur le déroulement du projet, après avoir recueilli et analysé l'information pertinente. Le thème central de ses activités a porté sur le développement de la composante francophone dans le cadre du PLCCC, la place faite au français dans les programmes canadiens de coopération avec la Chine et le déroulement du programme de français au CLCC. Les avis émis devaient prendre en compte toutes les parties en cause.

Comme le programme de français constituait, nous l'avons dit, une petite unité à l'intérieur du CLCC, de nombreuses questions ont été soulevées relativement à la place et à l'avenir du français à l'intérieur du centre. Or, la situation particulière de ce programme a fait en sorte que les interventions de l’A.S. ont parfois revêtu l’allure de demandes pressantes plutôt que celle de simples avis sur le déroulement. Mais l’insistance avec laquelle les professeurs, et parfois l’A.S., revenaient sur certaines questions relève davantage d’éléments d’ordre structurel, comme la nature du programme lui-même et les circonstances dans lesquelles il se déroulait, que des efforts et de la volonté de ceux qui exécutaient ce programme. Ces derniers ont du reste accueilli ces demandes avec patience et ont essayé de les prendre en compte, de manière à joindre leurs efforts à ceux qui travaillaient à la réalisation et à la réussite du projet. Car ce programme d’appui linguistique et culturel a été l’oeuvre d’un ensemble d’intervenants canadiens et chinois.

6. Étudiants chinois du programme de français du CLCC

En cette année d’anniversaires, il convient de signaler le travail accompli par les étudiants et stagiaires chinois qui ont reçu une formation linguistique et culturelle en français au CLCC. Ils ont réussi à vivre l’expérience de cette formation. Que d’efforts! Que de peines! Car apprendre une L2, c’est accepter de renoncer momentanément à sa langue maternelle et au pouvoir de la parole détenu grâce à celle-ci. C’est également se retrouver dans une position de dépendance langagière analogue parfois à celle d’un enfant. C’est évoluer socialement avec des traits de personnalité réduits à leur minimum. C’est accepter de s’exprimer avec une expression neutre et impersonnelle qui exclut notamment l’humour, la colère, la sympathie, et même l’intelligence et l’illustration de sa compétence dans son propre domaine de travail.

7. Conclusion

Ce programme de français L2, offert en milieu minoritaire plurilingue, a évolué au cours des années. Des efforts de divers types ont été fournis à tous les niveaux pour développer la composante francophone du CLCC, laquelle a été implantée quelque temps après la composante anglophone. Il convient à l’occasion de ces anniversaires de féliciter les divers intervenants de leurs efforts, de leur ténacité et de leur succès. Il convient également de féliciter les étudiants et stagiaires chinois qui ont participé au programme de français du CLCC et qui ont réussi à surmonter les nombreuses difficultés que comporte l’apprentissage d’une L2.

Bon anniversaire à tous!

Diane Huot est professeur de français au Département linguistique de l’Université Laval. Elle est aussi la monitrice de la section française au CLCC.

La section française/The French Section

Ann Curry

The French Section at the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) may have been small over the years, but its vibrancy and enthusiasm have been a hallmark of CCLC existence. Since Canada is a bilingual country, bilingual development assistance is negotiated between CIDA and MOFERT. The CCLC supports these initiatives by offering French and English language training, and so the CCLC becomes a happily trilingual culture!

While there are the usual *hard* support systems put in place for the French Section - classroom, office, materials, equipment, it is the *joie de vivre* or the *esprit de corps* that bowls over the CCLC visitor. I often think the CCLC anglophone and Chinese staff and anglophone trainees have become a little "blasé" about the presence of the French section, but that may be because we're used to all the excitement! It is fun, and something to be treasured, to be able to walk among cultures the way we do at the CCLC. One need only glance at a current newspaper to understand how unusual the CCLC situation is. I for one vote for more of the same!

Une Expérience Aigre Douce

Colette Soucy

Travailler au Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine de Beijing a été pour moi une des plus enrichissantes expériences de ma carrière d'enseignante. Si j'avais à la caractériser, je dirais qu'elle a été de saveur aigre-douce.

D'abord, voici ce qui en est pour le côté *aigre*. A mon arrivée au CLCC en 1988, j'ai trouvé pénible de constater l'existence d'une grande muraille qui séparait la section francophone et la section anglophone. Escalader ce mur n'était pas toujours chose facile. Par exemple, je vivais mal les remarques désobligeantes quand la section *distincte* du CLCC organisait ses propres activités en français. Aigre, aussi, l'inquiétude de ne jamais savoir s'il y aura un prochain semestre pour la section française et si nous aurons à déménager ou non. Aigre de toujours s'interroger sur cette aptitude de l'ACDI à trouver des projets pour des stagiaires francophones quand la coupe déborde du côté anglophone. Pourquoi cette inégalité et cette injustice?

Travailler au CLCC a représenté un défi dans ma vie. Certains jours, le côté aigre du projet a dominé mais, dans l'ensemble, c'est l'autre aspect que j'ai goûté. C'est l'harmonieuse combinaison des deux qui a transformé mon expérience en réalité aigre douce.

Voici ce qui a surtout constitué le côté *doux* de mes quelques années au CLCC. Depuis ma tendre enfance, je nourrissais le rêve de travailler en Chine continentale. Le CLCC m'a offert cette merveilleuse opportunité. C'est certain que le fait de me trouver du côté francophone m'a rendu les choses un peu plus complexes et délicates mais j'éprouve une grande joie en réalisant que, tel le mur de Berlin, la grande muraille qui séparait volet anglophone et volet francophone est tombée. Désormais, au CLCC, aucune cloison n'existe et un dialogue *bilingue* existe. Avec spontanéité les professeurs chinois francophones ont demandé à apprendre l'anglais et vice-versa. C'est comme si ça allait de soi. Et quand on n'arrive pas à se comprendre dans le dialogue bilingue, le dialogue se fait alors *trilingue*. Bien plus, ce n'est plus au côté francophone de toujours courir pour obtenir ou effectuer des traductions, nos collègues anglophones en prennent maintenant l'initiative avec amabilité et simplicité. Je n'ai plus besoin de faire un acte de foi pour croire au bilinguisme car j'y ai touché du doigt ici. Je me souviendrai toujours de cette expérience d'ouverture à l'autre et de partage culturel.

Dans la section francophone, sur le plan professionnel, nous avons réellement toujours travaillé ENSEMBLE et main dans la main. Entre autre, mes collègues chinoises m'ont appris à mieux comprendre la Chine et à aller au-delà de la *face* qui n'est qu'apparence et illusion. Elles m'ont aidée à devenir un peu plus flexible et à l'écoute de l'autre dans sa différence. Sur le plan personnel, au CLCC, j'ai vécu une expérience unique de solidarité, de fraternité et d'amitié. Je me suis sentie accueillie et aimée telle que je suis avec mes richesses et mes pauvretés. Je ne me sens pas plus parfaite qu'auparavant mais je me sens plus tolérante et plus aimante parce qu'on m'a d'abord offert ces cadeaux. Et, Dieu sait, combien mes collègues ont été patientes et aimantes!! Je garderai dans mon coeur un souvenir vivant de ce que la Chine m'a offert avec tant de largesse.

C'est avec nostalgie et tristesse que je quitte le Centre. Ce qui me console c'est , qu'un jour, je reviendrai en Chine. Ma route avec ce grand pays aussi varié que les couleurs de l'arc-en-ciel, n'est pas terminée. Je n'en suis qu'à mes premiers pas! Les prochaines étapes me sont encore inconnues mais je sais qu'elles seront des bonds en avant dans cette Longue Marche de l'amitié sino-canadienne... Amitié qui se voudrait à l'épreuve de toutes les intempéries et conflits. Car l'amitié véritable ne finit jamais de fleurir et de produire des fruits pour les générations présentes et futures.

Colette Soucy, née au Québec, est spécialisée dans l'enseignement des langues modernes et détient une maîtrise en linguistique appliquée. Elle enseigne les langues (français/anglais) depuis une quinzaine d'années dont plus de dix ans en Asie. Depuis quatre ans, elle est responsable de la section française du Centre Linguistique Canada/Chine de Beijing et y travaille aussi comme professeure.

Memories of the CCLCP

John Redmond

My association with the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program (CCLCP) goes back over seven years. In February of 1985, I was asked by my director to take over as coordinator of the Pacific Region Orientation Centre (PaROC) from Helen Vanwel, the original coordinator who was bound for Halifax to become the first-ever national coordinator.

I had been, until then, enjoying working at the English Language Institute of University of British Columbia (UBC), teaching ESL to students from around the world. I was rather reluctant to leave my classes and take on an unknown quantity, but the chance to work with China and Chinese people was too much to resist. So, I agreed with my director that I would take over the coordination of PaROC for six months. I just said "six months", yet that was over seven years ago. What happened? Well, Helen decided that Halifax wasn't such a bad place, and then she went on to China and Indonesia. In short, she never did come back.

This left me sitting here, happy as a clam, doing what I had been wanting to do since I graduated from UBC long ago with my B.A. in Chinese Studies. It's odd how things sometimes work out better for everyone, without disadvantage to anyone.

I visited the CCLC in December of 1988, when, with then CAMEC coordinator Gisele Trubey, we visited China on a fact-finding mission. At first, I was somewhat taken aback by the spartan nature of the facilities, and the general darkness of the building on cloudy days. However, as soon as I was introduced to the CCLC trainees, smiles chased away any gloom that had been there.

During our one-week visit, we managed to see and talk to almost all the trainees enrolled at that time. I gave a slide show on Canada and the ROC system to a packed audience. They were hanging from the rafters, and enthralled with the slides, in spite of the room lacking a screen.

We left, full of hope for the future of our project and full of respect for the hard-working teachers and trainees of the CCLC. We learned what we did not know. We learned that people are not only good at destroying the old world, but are also good at building the new. Remembering our experience, I can say that everyone we met at the CCLC was modest and prudent, guarded against arrogance and richness, and served the people heart and soul. Good memories of a good place. (Adapted from *Quotations from Chairman Mao* [Second edition])

So, here we are, 1992. Not only am I still with the China Program, but my original staff are also still with me. Pat Marshall, PaROC's program assistant, has been here since the centre was born back in 1983. Mackie Chase, who has worked in almost every part of the China Program including the CCLC, started out in 1985, as a teacher on one of PaROC's earliest programs and is now our Education Specialist.

Seven years is a long time, but ten years of the CCLC is longer, and 90 years of BNU is the longest of all! Who knows what we will all be doing in seven or ten years but let's hope that the future equals the past in terms of adventure, excitement and the satisfaction of seeing a job done well. Happy anniversary CCLC and BNU.

John Redmond, coordinator of PaROC, did his B.A. in Chinese studies at UBC, and then spent four years in Tokyo, teaching English. Returning to Canada, he taught briefly at Vancouver Community College before returning to both work and study at UBC. He received his high school teaching certificate and then his M.Ed. in TESL, at the same time teaching ESL for UBC's English Language Institute. In 1985, he was appointed coordinator of PaROC.

My Memories with the CCLCP

Hermann F. Schwind

Let me use the opportunity to congratulate the staff of the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program (CCLCP) and the Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) for its accomplishments over the last 10 years. It is truly remarkable what has been done regarding the teaching of English/French as second languages in China, with the development of special curricula, teaching material, library resources, films, etc., together with the expertise for language testing. The reputation of the CCLC is well established.

When I think of the CCLCP I think of the three desks in a small room in the Administration Building at Saint Mary's, of long hours writing reports, or preparing budgets, or of hour-long phone calls either early in the morning or late into the evening. I think of the first staff members, who sometimes had to work until two in the morning to get the books out, the language test stapled and bound, or to complete an urgent report. There was no time to relax, everything was under pressure, too much was coming at them, and all with little experience in running such a large program.

But there were many very positive experiences. The CCLCP, the ROCs, and the CCLC together formed a tightly knit group, helping each other in stress, sharing set-backs and enjoying successes. Some individual Canadians will always be linked to the CCLCP/CCLC: Mary Sun, the tireless initiator and skilled negotiator, who got the whole program rolling; David Swanson, who had a major impact on the development of the CCLC and almost lost his life on the job; Charles Gertsbain and Chen Lijia, two excellent and dedicated teachers, who both lost their lives in the automobile accident in which David Swanson was seriously injured; Helen Vanwel, who first was the ROC Coordinator and then took over the Canadian directorship of the CCLC (then called CCLTC); she did a marvelous job in coping with the stress the two deaths and several injuries to teachers caused in the centre; and Sondra Marshall-Smith, first a teacher at the CCLC and then the National Coordinator in Canada, who was instrumental in curriculum and test development.

There are many others who contributed to the success of the program, but these are individuals whose name come readily to mind. Certainly, the CCLC has raised Canada's profile in China, and there is no doubt in my mind that the CCLCP has made a significant contribution to the cooperation and better understanding between the two countries.

The Beginning

Mary Sun

In 1979, Mary Sun was an Associate Professor of Chinese History and Chairman of the Program of Asian Studies at Saint Mary's University (SMU), Halifax, when she accepted a secondment from the Department of External Affairs to serve as First Secretary, Cultural & Scientific Exchanges, in the Canadian Embassy, Beijing. Upon completion of the two-year term, CIDA had just signed the Official Development Assistance agreement with the Government of China, she became the first director of the Canada/China Language and Cultural Program (CCLCP) until her departure from China in 1984. Since then she has lived in Hanoi, Paris, and from 1989 in Bangkok.

"The CCLCP was the first CIDA project in China, and was meant to service all other projects to follow in providing language and cultural support to Chinese trainees. The project began in the fall of 1982, and the Centre opened its doors to the first group of trainees in April, 1983. My keenest memories of those days? Incredible excitement, anxiety, but most of all pressure to get the project going. Thinking back, I cannot believe I could have put in such hours, and done the Beijing-Ottawa-Halifax commute so often! But our team, both in China and in Canada - the language teachers, the administrators, the ROC directors - was fantastic; everyone put in superhuman efforts, and we are certain of our place in CIDA's history as the original unbeatable CCLCP team."

Dear Reader:

Working in partnership with the All China Women's Federation (ACWF) and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), the **Canada China Women in Development Project** (CCWID)'s goal is to increase participation of women in China's economic modernization. The project gives ACWF cadre training and experience in sponsoring micro, small, and medium scale income-generating projects in which women are the chief agents and beneficiaries. The project has a four-year cycle and officially began in March 1990.

The project has three main purposes. Firstly it supports income-generating projects and human resource development for Chinese women through a Women in Development fund with both grant and revolving-fund components. The target groups for these projects include primarily rural women, illiterate women, women from remote mountainous regions, women from national minorities, and women who are waiting for employment.

Secondly it strengthens the institutional capacities of the ACWF to define, develop and manage projects, conduct gender analysis, and improve the situation of women in China.

Finally, it trains trainers from ACWF in economic development, project management, current women's issues, and technical skills that are economically viable for grass roots target groups. Within this, it trains the CCWID project office staff to undertake full responsibility for a wide range of tasks involved in managing major government and non-government funded women-in-development projects.

The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) has cooperated with our project not only by providing language training and testing services for those ACWF staff chosen to go to Canada for training, but also by consulting with us on what would be possible to do in China. The CCLC managers met with us and our consultant to give input to our needs assessment, and with us to discuss office staff development. As well, the in-Canada component of the Canada/China Language and Cultural Project (CCLCP) received our trainees for cultural training programs upon arrival in Canada.

The services provided by the CCLCP have reinforced the ability of our project to carry out its purposes.

Yours sincerely,

Diane Tyler/Wu Jie
Co-Directors
Canada-China Women in Development Project Office

Dear Readers,

The Canada/China Language Centre (CCLC) has provided a program of language training and cultural awareness to 800 Chinese professionals preparing for Canadian work/study placements under the Canada-China Human Development Training Program (CCHDTP). Jointly administered by World University Service of Canada (WUSC) and the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade (MFERT), CCHDTP maintains regular contact with the CCLC through the Beijing Joint Office. The CCLC has administered bi-annual CanTESTs for candidates of CCHDTP, and has also provided briefings and general advice on language training and testing. The close relationship with the CCLC dates back to 1983 when both programs were established.

The services of the CCLC have been critical to the success of CCHDTP. Most professionals selected to go to Canada under the program require one or two semesters of intensive language preparation. Experience has also shown that visiting professionals generally need high level English or French language skills to function effectively in their academic and practical placements. Approximately fifty percent of the CCLC graduates since 1984 have been CCHDTP professionals. Needless to say, both programs have worked closely together to plan and carry out their respective training.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the CCLC and the 90th anniversary of Beijing Normal University, staff and graduates of the CCHDTP program would like to extend their appreciation to colleagues, past and present. The language training and culture awareness program administered by the CCLC has been the support which has made CIDA-funded training programs effective.

The CCLC programme concludes December, 1992. We would like to wish our colleagues well in their future endeavours.

Yours sincerely,

Kathleen Speake and Mi Xiya
Co-Directors
Beijing Joint Office
Canada-China Human Development Training Programme

List of Abbreviations

ACWF = All China Women's Federation
AROC = Atlantic Region Orientation Centre
BNU = Beijing Normal University
CAAC = Civil Aviation Administration of China
CAMEC = Centre à Montréal pour les échanges avec la Chine (ROC)
CanTEST = Canadian Test of English for Scholars and Trainees
CCCSU = Canada/China Cooperation Support Unit
CCHDTP = Canada/China Human Development Training Program
CCLC = Canada/China Language Centre (previous name of CCLC)
CCLCP = Canada/China Language and Cultural Program
CCLTC = Canada/China Language Training Centre
CCWID = Canada China Women in Development Project
CD = curriculum development
CEA = Canadian Executing Agency
CIDA = Canadian International Development Agency
CNPC = China National Petroleum Corporation
EFL = English as a Foreign Language
EPT = English Proficiency Test
ESL = English as a Second Language
ESP = English for Specific Purposes
FAO = Foreign Affairs Office
FFL = French as a Foreign Language
FLD = Foreign Languages Department
FSL = French as a Second Language
HRD = Human Resource Development
IRT = Item Response Theory
L2 = second language
LSU = Local Support Unit (old name for CCCSU)
MFERT = Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade
ODA = Overseas Development Assistance
OGTTP = Oil and Gas Technology Transfer Project
OROC = Ontario Region Orientation Centre
PaROC = Pacific Region Orientation Centre
PROC = Prairie Region Orientation Centre
ROC = Regional Orientation Centre
RCI = Radio Canada International
SEDC = State Education Commission
SMU = St. Mary's University
SWPI = Southwest Petroleum Institute
TEFL = Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESL = Teaching English as a Second Language
TESTCan = French CanTEST
TOEFL = Test of English as a Foreign Language
UBC = University of British Columbia
UIBE = University of International Business and Ecomomics
WUSC = World University Service of Canada